

*Illegal Immigration ■ From Factory to Foxhole ■ The Forgotten President*

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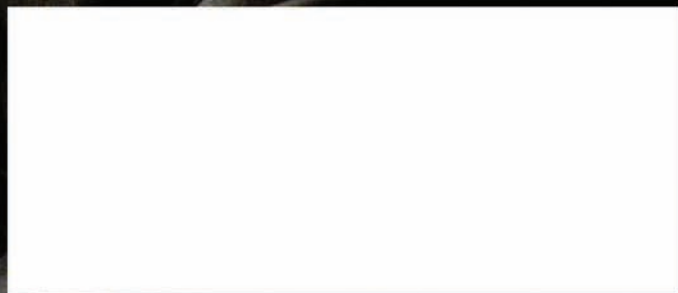
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For God and Country

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The American Legion Magazine, a leader among national general-interest publications, is published monthly by The American Legion for its 2.7 million members. These wartime veterans, working through 15,000 community-level posts, dedicate themselves to God and Country and traditional American values; strong national security; adequate and compassionate care for veterans, their widows and orphans; community service; and the wholesome development of our nation's youth.

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## Thanks from Baghdad

I'm an Army specialist serving in the Baghdad area. I'm also a member of American Legion Post 31 in Kewanee, Ill. I have the magazine sent to me over here and felt compelled to write a letter thanking The American Legion for its support of the mission we're accomplishing here in Iraq. People back home only know what goes on here by what they see on the news. Everyone knows we are ridding Iraq of Saddam's loyalists and terrorists. What they don't know is that we also are working with the Iraqi people to improve their lives. My unit does daily combat patrols around the Baghdad area. We've seen heavy fighting lately, but we've also seen and done a lot of good things.

Almost every person we encounter is friendly. They understand we are trying to help them. In turn, we give them MREs, bottled water and anything else to make their lives easier. Giving their families even one meal is greatly appreciated. Some areas here are filled with such poverty, yet the people are hardworking and optimistic. They want a democratic country free of violence and terrorism just like we do. Every day we see children so innocent and unaware of what is going on around them. You see smiles on their faces as they wave at you, just hoping you will wave back and say hello. Things like that make me proud to represent and serve my country. Thank you for your support. It doesn't go unappreciated.

— Spc. Nicholas Welgat, F Battery 4/5 ADA 1st Cavalry Division

### Agent Orange in Korea

The article "Agent Orange: Haze of Deception" (June) did not mention that Agent Orange was sprayed in and around the Korean DMZ in 1968 and 1969. Veterans who served in certain units along the Korean DMZ now have a presumption of exposure to Agent Orange and are entitled to Agent Orange Registry Exams, as well

as medical treatment and hospital care from VA. They also may be eligible for disability benefits.

— David Benbow, Statesville, N.C.

### In Tommy's memory

My brother, Thomas McCarthy, recently died after a fall due to fainting while walking up a flight of stairs. He served 26 years in the U.S. Air Force. At least five were

spent in Vietnam, where he volunteered to rappel into jungles and rescue downed pilots. When Tommy retired, he was a tired old man just over 50, battling diabetes, high blood pressure, kidney failure, cancer and partial paralysis. He retired on 50-percent disability and began fighting the government to prove his numerous illnesses were related to his service in Vietnam's jungles. Last July, the government relented and put him on 100-percent disability, without acknowledging that his illnesses were caused by his service. He died seven months later.

As past national security director for Catholic War Veterans and a 40-year Legionnaire, I tried for years to help Tommy fight the government, to no avail. It refused to admit the Agent Orange connection. Tommy was an outstanding athlete and in excellent health before he joined the Air Force. The Yankees and Orioles offered him baseball contracts, and the Celtics offered him a basketball contract, so you know he was in top physical condition. He received several medals for gallantry. I add this to show that he was not a weak, sick man before his exposure in the jungles of Vietnam.

Keep fighting for veterans of the Vietnam War. They deserve better than they have received from our government. Do it in memory of Tommy and all the others like him.

— Jim McCarthy, Wilkes-Barre, Pa.

### Waiting in frustration

I served two separate terms with the Marine Corps in Vietnam and, upon returning, was diagnosed with Agent Orange exposure. Only after months and years of constant visits to the VA clinic, though, did I finally get the diagnosis. During that time I had a son born with a cleft lip and learning disabilities, both of which, I was told, were related to my Agent Orange encounter.



U.S. Army

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I have heard about some kind of settlement but am told that any monies are being held back to help the offspring of Agent Orange victims. Your article suggests that 52,000 received payments of \$3,800. I was one of the 105,000 who filed claims, but I never received a final declaration on the matter. I have now been diagnosed with skin cancer and await further test results. I wrote to my congressman, which was a waste of time. I also tried to get a Purple Heart, but getting a disease doesn't qualify you. Having a child born deformed doesn't qualify you. You must bleed.

— Norm Croteau, Amston, Conn.

## Credit where due

"The Greatest Legislation" allowed the "greatest generation" to be the best-educated generation and, as such, transformed America. As a benefactor of the GI Bill, I hope Past National Commander Harry W. Colmery will be nationally recognized as the author.

— John Newcomer, Rockford, Ill.

## A changed life

"The Greatest Legislation" was enlightening and rewarding, especially for those of us fortunate enough to have been recipients of the GI Bill. The American Legion and I go way back, to June 1943. Upon graduating from high school, I was honored to receive the American Legion Medal for being an outstanding male student in American democracy and U.S. history. One year later, the Army drafted me. While serving in Calcutta, India, I learned of the GI Bill providing college benefits to servicemen. For me, that benefit meant as much as a drink of water to a man dying of thirst.

When I returned to the United States, I went to the veterans office in Camden, N.J. No way could I afford a college education without the GI Bill. A representative told me Temple University in Philadelphia was accepting applications from returning servicemen. I applied and was accepted. As an undergraduate, I met the girl who would become my wife of 55 years and hopefully

many more. She gave me two wonderful children, a daughter with a human-resources business in California and a son who is a vice president with Time Warner.

I want to tip my hat to The American Legion for designing the GI Bill and pushing it through Congress. Thank you, thank you, thank you.

— John W. Wohlfarth, Cloverdale, Calif.

## Slippery road

I would like to thank Jay Stuller for much-needed insight into the violent and pornographic content of today's media ("Not Child's Play," June), including the games our kids play. The indecent acts forced upon our Iraqi prisoners are likely a consequence of this brainwashing. Instead of blaming Donald Rumsfeld, our media egomaniacs would do well to look at their own part in creating this mindset that has so little regard for human life. Every parent who has purchased such games, or allowed such games and movies, shoulders some of the blame. So does each and every American, for we have allowed our society to drift down the slippery road of immorality.

— James Cramer, via e-mail

## Parents' job

Jay Stuller's article "Not Child's Play" is interesting. I'm currently in college, with a 3.0 and above GPA, and I love "Grand Theft Auto: Vice City," "Mortal Kombat," "Resident Evil," "Manhunt" and any other M (Mature)-rated games I can get my hands on. Did I mention my major is criminal justice? Didn't think so. I'm so tired of people blaming things that happen in real life on video games and entertainment. The truth is that the ratings system changes nothing. Kids are going to find a way to get the stuff they want, whether it's the newest video game or a drug with which they want to experiment. Ultimately it's up to the parents of these kids to teach them right or wrong. Don't blame Rockstar Games for "Grand Theft Auto." Blame our society.

— Dawn Blake, Edgecomb, Maine

## 'Oral utterance'

I read and enjoyed Steven Lubet's article about the flag amendment ("Toward Purposeful Dissent," June). Sorry to say that two of the senators who voted against it were from my state. I wrote and told them of my opinion of their stand. I also suggested to Lubet that the nine men and women of the Supreme Court should read Webster's Dictionary instead of Blackwell's law books. They would see that speech is an "oral utterance." Defecating on the flag may be an utterance, but it sure isn't oral.

— Jehu Malone, Merrillan, Wis.

## Standing with Scouts

This winter, I entered my second year as a member of The American Legion. Originally I joined the organization as a demonstration of solidarity with my fellow soldiers, Marines, sailors and airmen who have served our nation overseas. That reason recently fell by the side when I read on the Boy Scout Web site of the Legion's commitment to Scouting and the principles it teaches.

As a former Boy Scout and an active-duty military officer, I cannot adequately express my gratitude to the Legion for its continuous support of Scouting. The lessons in leadership, duty, selfless service and integrity that I learned as a Boy Scout have carried me through many years, hardships and subsequent challenges to my character. I can still recite from memory the Scout Oath, Law and Motto and, more importantly, I still use them as a guide in my daily life.

Without a doubt, I believe it is the best organization for molding boys into men – teaching them about their responsibilities to their communities, nation and deity. I sincerely thank The American Legion for standing with the Boy Scouts, even in the face of adversity and attacks from organizations focused on tearing down a great worldwide institution. I rest easy knowing that my dues – this year and in future years – support such a worthy cause.

— John M. Cooper, Fort Huachuca, Ariz.

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# Why the world must never forget

For a quiet moment, I stood on a paved trail that overlooks the bluff and sand at Omaha Beach. In my mind, I replayed the scene, one I previously knew only through books, films and a few scattered anecdotes I'd heard from those who stormed ashore to save the world on D-Day.

The German emplacements were angled and interlocked, high above the beachhead. It was plain to see from where I stood how easily a Nazi machine gunner could cut down an Allied soldier, from the moment he hit the water through his heart-pounding sprint to cover, in the field of fire.

To think about it is one thing. To be where it happened, 60 years later, is another. But the real meaning of D-Day and the U.S.-led victory in World War II still can be found in the eyes of the people who were saved and the men who saved them.

During 60th anniversary ceremonies in France, citizens there recognized me, although a couple of war eras removed, as a representative of the heroes who drove the Third Reich from their country in 1944 and 1945. The Allies suffered more than 61,000 casualties in the first 30 days of the invasion, including more than 9,000 killed on D-Day. Last June, all across France, the beneficiaries of that sacrifice stepped forward and repeated, "Thank you, America. Thank you for liberating us." In one town, a mayor halted his schedule to meet with us only to express his gratitude.

In Paris, we gathered at the Hotel Des Invalides, a former French veterans hospital near Napoleon's tomb. The French government had paid to bring in 100 U.S. veterans to pin them with the Legion of Merit. The following day at Omaha Beach, President Bush and French President Jacques Chirac, who we know have been at odds over our ongoing efforts to liberate Iraq, found common ground. They spoke of two centuries as allies, of the separate legacies they share from D-Day – how it saved France and defined America. Both national anthems were played. Volleys were fired. Tears were shed.

I talked with one emotion-choked U.S. veteran. "I don't know how I made it ... or why I made it." When he looked across the sand and along the bluff, he saw the ghosts of freedom's price.

Earlier, I was in Washington for the dedication of the World War II Memorial on the National Mall. More than 150,000 World War II veterans had come to see what many of them felt they never really needed: a monument. Veterans of World War II saw victory as reward enough – the freedom that emerged from their sacrifices, the prosperity of the 20th century, a world saved from dictatorship, imperialism, the Holocaust.

The monument is for us. And it is for future generations who must always know our planet once stood at the precipice of a second Dark Age, one that human civilization might have spent centuries fighting to overcome. Thank God the veterans of World War II were strong enough, brave and willing to fight to the death – with no turning back – for my freedom, for that of my children and grandchildren, and all their future generations. I hope they all take time at the National Mall or the Normandy coast to think about what might have been.



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National Commander  
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## memoranda

### IMPACT 2004

By the end of August, President Bush and Democratic challenger Sen. John Kerry will present their answers to the Military & Veterans Vote Impact 2004 online debate at [www.impact04.legion.org](http://www.impact04.legion.org). Also at the Web site, visitors will find voter-registration information for active-duty personnel.

### SHOOTING SPORTS

The 14th Annual Legion Junior Shooting Sports Tournament is Aug. 10-14, Colorado Springs.

### LEGION WORLD SERIES

The 79th Annual American Legion Baseball World Series is set for Aug. 20-24 at Hansen Stadium on Taylor Field in Corvallis, Ore. Eight regional champs from across the United States will converge on Corvallis, site of the 1990 series. Each game will be scored live from Hansen Stadium on [www.baseball.legion.org](http://www.baseball.legion.org).

### NATIONAL CONVENTION

The American Legion's 86th Annual National Convention is planned for Aug. 27-Sept. 2 in Nashville, Tenn. For information about the Nashville area, visit [www.nashvillecgvb.com](http://www.nashvillecgvb.com) and to read about the convention, including summaries of newly adopted resolutions, visit [www.legion.org](http://www.legion.org), see September's *Dispatch* and November's issue of *The American Legion Magazine* for complete coverage.

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# Prohibit legal same-sex marriage?



## YES

**Rep. Marilyn Musgrave**  
*R-Colo.*

■ Former school teacher Musgrave is a member of the House Education and Agriculture Committees.



## NO

**Cheryl Jacques**

■ Jacques is president of the Human Rights Campaign, a national lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender organization.

Marriage is a unique union between one woman and one man. Marriage is facing a particular challenge – the threat of a radical redefinition. The essential role this institution plays in American society is being undone by a handful of activist judges, including four members of the Massachusetts Supreme Judicial Court who ruled that traditional marriage is unconstitutional and must be redefined to include homosexual couples.

The gay and lesbian lobby shopped around various state courts and found a group of judges to legitimize their lifestyle as an equivalent to traditional marriage. They hit the jackpot in Massachusetts.

This redefinition of marriage began in earnest, when court-ordered gay marriage licenses were issued in Massachusetts.

Homosexual couples stormed the state to marry and then began challenging state laws around the nation by demanding their marriages be legally recognized, as traditional marriage is, under the Constitution's Full Faith and Credit clause.

As a result, I introduced the Federal Marriage Amendment, to define marriage in the Constitution as a union between one man and one woman.

Instead of going through the deliberative, legislative process, gay activists are turning to the courts to force gay marriage on the American people. The Federal Marriage Amendment will simply prevent unelected judges from redefining marriage. In addition, this bill protects states from having to recognize any civil union another state enacts and prohibits state and federal courts from forcing civil unions on state legislatures.

Failing to pass the amendment will leave marriage to the whims of rogue judges who would forever blur the boundaries. The American people will be forced to accept relationships regardless of what form they take.

Four justices in Massachusetts should not be allowed to force gay "marriage" on the entire nation. Judges should not legislate from the bench.

As brave American troops fight a war in Iraq, some politicians are focusing on a constitutional amendment that would, for the very first time, enshrine discrimination into our nation's guiding legal document.

My father served in the Air Force during the Korean War and was a commander of The American Legion in Millis, Mass. I expect his belief is

shared by many enlisted men and women today that politicians should focus on ensuring that soldiers have the body armor they need, the compensation they deserve and the respect they've earned.

But some want to use the Constitution to take protections away. The so-called "Federal Marriage Amendment" would prevent same-sex couples from visiting each other in the

hospital, sharing health insurance and receiving survivor and tax benefits. It would prevent same-sex couples not only from marrying but also from entering into civil unions.

Changing the Constitution is not the right approach. In the past 214 years, the Constitution has only been amended 17 times, always only to expand the rights of Americans, including the abolishment of slavery and giving women and African-Americans the right to vote.

What's even more bewildering is that there is already a federal law that denies marriage to same-sex couples. This amendment distracts members of Congress from America's real challenges – like job losses, national security and the economy. Meanwhile, every day, young American men and women – some who are gay – are losing their lives fighting in Iraq.

Patriotic gay and lesbian veterans – including a former rear admiral – gathered at our headquarters to speak out for fairness and equality in the military and throughout American life. This event demonstrated that America is strongest when we put aside our differences and unite around the values of freedom and equality we cherish.

## THE HEART OF THE ISSUE

Homosexual marriage has been legalized in Massachusetts, and laws in other states defining marriage as exclusively between a man and a woman could be struck down as a result. A constitutional amendment is proposed to ban same-sex marriages.

## CONTACT YOUR LEADERS

The Honorable (name), U.S. Senate, Washington, DC 20510 • Phone: (202) 224-3121

The Honorable (name), House of Representatives, Washington, DC 20515 • Phone: (202) 225-3121

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# FORGIVEN TRESPASSES

*Illegal aliens from around the world  
expose America's vulnerabilities.*

STORY AND PHOTOS BY JEFF STOFFER

**COYOTES ARE GATHERING.** Their pickups and SUVs toss silver clouds into the desert twilight. Three sets of headlights, maybe four, bounce across the darkening expanse, all coming from different directions toward a run-down rancheria barely into Sonora. In a time not long ago but somehow forgotten, Mexican vaqueros herded cattle here, to within reach of U.S. markets. The corrals still stand, as do some weathered outbuildings. But cows are no longer driven to this place near the border. People are.

The rancheria is still, aside from shadows that sporadically flash in doorways or drift along fencelines. They come in and out of binocular sight until the gnarled Sierra Madre horizon fades to black, and generator lights flicker on and undulate, like tribal fire on the eve of war. U.S. homeowners two miles away look through their living-room windows and witness the scene, ordinary as the evening news – the coyotes, their headlights, the shadows, and another new shipment of flesh and blood.

Human smugglers known as “coyotes” perpetually feed more and more people into the United States from foreign lands and out of whatever unknown, unchecked circumstances they left behind. These migrants could be convicted felons or political refugees, narco-terrorists or sex slaves, tuberculars or teen-age

boys willing to scour toilets or mow lawns for minimum wage, or do more for less. They might come from South America, Asia, Africa or the Middle East. No matter who comes or from where, the door is open for a coyote’s price: \$1,500 a head for a typical Hispanic laborer, up to \$50,000 for a sojourner from a nation of

concern in the war on terrorism.

They come in immeasurable waves to dozens of staging areas like the corrals south of Cochise County, Ariz., where the San Pedro River’s listless headwaters grow enough cottonwoods and willows to make good cover 140 miles into the United States. This is the soft underbelly of America’s



Chris Simcox of Tombstone, Ariz., scans the washes south of the San Pedro River, looking for illegal aliens in transit to America. He says his civilian border patrol has assisted in the apprehension of more than 2,500 immigrants from foreign countries.

2,000-mile border with Mexico. Aliens who don't die crossing the desert or get nabbed by authorities along the way funnel into southern Arizona, dump their backpacks in the bushes of remote "lay-up" areas and ride silently into the swelling underground of America's undocumented. No one is certain in what number they are coming or how fast, where they are heading, or if they ever intend to go back. Coyotes don't publish statistics.

Anecdotal evidence of illegal immigration's impact, however, is mounting in places like Phoenix, where last winter's string of "drop-house" busts astonished even the most alien-hardened Arizonans, people who have grown accustomed to seeing young men schooled up in parking lots of home-improvement stores, offering in broken English to perform household labor for handfuls of cash. In a two-week period last February, Phoenix police broke up 10 drop

houses where illegal immigrants were held captive, awaiting extortion money to pay their smugglers and keep the line moving in America. One-hundred fifty-nine immigrants were discovered living in filth, afraid to go outside, in one unfurnished home rented to coyotes. Seventy-eight were found under the roof of another, in a neighborhood where home values commonly hit \$400,000. One immigrant who emerged from a drop house told *The Arizona Republic* he was among about 100 who "were packed in there like a pack of cigarettes." The raids did more than expose a few isolated examples of just how inhumane the illegal alien game has become; they produced rare hard numbers to illustrate a fast-changing social condition America does not – perhaps by choice – fully calculate.

Estimates that put the U.S. illegal-immigrant population somewhere between 8 million

and 12 million come from U.S. Census Bureau calculations that seem to assume undocumented foreigners dutifully fill out government forms and truthfully answer questions that could reveal their eligibility for deportation. According to those estimates, America's illegal-immigrant population more than doubled in the last decade of the 20th century. Those who anxiously monitor such phenomena say the actual number of illegal aliens in our midst is much higher. Kathy McKee, director of an organization called Protect Arizona Now (PAN), which has campaigned this year for a ballot initiative requiring proof of citizenship of those seeking to vote or to receive welfare benefits, says she believes up to 30 million undocumented aliens are living in America. But no one really knows because they're virtually impossible to count, like so many goldfish in a tank, moving anonymously from job to

job, using pseudonyms, flashing counterfeit Social Security cards, fake work visas or illegally obtained driver's licenses. Undocumented immigrants also can sink pretty deeply into American society on their Mexico-issued matricula consular cards alone. Available to anyone with money, the cards are not always accepted as legal identification in Mexico, but they are good enough to open an American bank account. Critics of the cards say they are useful *only* to illegal immigrants because foreigners with real visas are required to carry other forms of U.S.-issued ID. An American auto dealer in Phoenix bought a Mexican matricula consular card over the Internet for \$80, just to prove he could. The card lists his birthplace as Tijuana, British Columbia.

To survive in the U.S. economy, undocumented workers materialize each morning before the eyes of potential employers who are increasingly compelled to solicit their cheap, dependable labor to stay competitive in industries from meatpacking to homebuilding. Illegal status undoubtedly leaves immigrants susceptible to labor abuse

(according to one estimate, undocumented workers die on the job at more than double the rate of U.S. citizens), but the relationship has risks for employers, too, who can be

prosecuted for failing to confirm the authenticity of work visas and for ignoring state and federal tax withholdings.

Hispanic laborers paid under the table will work hard and long in all kinds of weather, employers say – often at half the wages commanded by Americans, yet 10 times the pay in Mexico. They put in their hours. They are rewarded with cash. They buy groceries, drive cars, rent apartments and have babies. They are

a fast-growing consumer group, a target market whose dollars are coveted by a growing Spanish-language advertising industry, on billboards, radio, television and in print media. Immigrants annually wire back to Mexico billions of dollars, a point often repeated by those who defend illegal labor as an offset to the \$14 million to \$18 million in foreign aid sent to

America's second-leading trade partner. The amount immigrants sent back to Mexico last year is estimated as high as \$17 billion, but

there is no agreed-upon figure, and only conjecture about where the money actually goes. A good portion of it is known to feed the coyotes and pay for counterfeit credentials.

Once in America, illegal immigrants enroll their children in public schools and often can receive resident college tuition rates, while U.S. citizens from other states and foreigners here legally cannot. Children of illegal immigrants are blamed for straining public-education

**A 2002 study of 48 terrorists revealed that at least 21 had violated U.S. immigration laws before taking part in terrorism activities.**

– Center for Immigration Studies

babies” are a ticket to citizenship for their parents, forging links in the blood chains that ultimately pull grandparents, uncles, aunts, cousins and other relatives across the border. More than one third of those here illegally receive some form of public assistance. Illegal immigrants can register to vote in many states, over the Internet if so desired (one man in

Arizona registered his dog to vote, according to the PAN Website), and can cast ballots without proving citizenship or identity. Approximately

190,000 illegal aliens are in a U.S. jail at any given time. Some use bogus green cards to join the U.S. Armed Forces and become naturalized that way; more than 16,000 active-duty personnel last year reportedly had unknown citizen status. Others simply cling to their anonymity until the U.S. government tosses up an offer of amnesty, which is alarmingly inevitable, in one form or another. In that case, all is forgiven.

America is, after all, a nation of immigrants. Often, only a generation or two separates any of us from the poor, the tired, the huddled masses who booked steerage-class passage and wobbled seasick onto Ellis Island a half-century or more ago, or bobbed away from a Vietnam or a Cuba, in more recent years. So many are Americans today because someone before them left a home country and landed in a place that was more idea than location, an opportunity for things to be better, and they usually were. No other country welcomes more immigrants, legal or otherwise, than the United States, which makes room for at least 2 million a year and doubtless many more. That legacy is the basis of thinking for those who view immigration's newest manifestation as just another chapter in an ongoing American saga. But the story is much different now, or so it seems, since the events of Sept. 11, 2001.



Auto dealer Rusty Childress of Phoenix bought a Mexican matricula consular card for \$80 over the Internet.

budgets, lowering standardized test scores and raising dropout rates, if for no other reason than the language barrier. When sick or hurt, illegal aliens can take their problems to U.S.

hospitals and clinics, knowing they will receive treatment even if they don't have the ability – or inclination – to pay for it. They re-introduce to America previously controlled diseases like tuberculosis and cholera. Some file federal income tax returns and rake in huge refunds because, as low-paid parents of dependent children, they qualify for earned-income credits – one of many incentives for rapid procreation. U.S.-born “anchor



A U.S. Border Patrol agent interviews a group of tired illegal immigrants alongside State Highway 80 between Douglas and Bisbee, Ariz. Apprehensions increased more than 50 percent in the first quarter of 2004, compared to the same period in 2003.

Immigration has always had an uncomfortable seat in the U.S. economic theater, but the terrorist attacks in New York, Washington and Pennsylvania – triggered in part by illegal aliens – amplified awareness of America’s potential for exploitation by undocumented foreign enemies. The 21st-century economy suddenly can’t be considered outside the context of illegal immigration’s effects on wage suppression, unemployment and government budget deficits. Author Victor Davis Hanson writes in “Mexifornia: A State of Becoming” (2003, Encounter Press) that illegal migration into the U.S. economy from Mexico is no longer a cyclical phenomenon predicated by the seasonal needs of agriculture. The illegal immigrant, he argues, is coming to stay, with no intention of returning to a hopeless or dangerous home country, nor with much desire to assimilate into U.S. culture. And now, the illegal immigrant is not asked to assimilate. “The problem ... is the changing attitude toward immigration and assimilation – making too many of us separate and unequal,” Hanson writes. “It has always been easier for people who emigrate to keep their own culture than to join the majority

– if we have learned anything from our turn-of-the-century arrivals, it is that assimilation is difficult.” Furthermore, Hanson argues, America no longer requires assimilation.

Even more disturbing than socioeconomic shifts is the reality that America is now in its third year of an amorphous global war against suicidal anti-Western lunatics who know they can always hire a coyote and cross the desert with all the viruses, chemicals or nuclear devices that will fit in a backpack. Out in the vast sea of immigration statistics – however reliable they may be – float the estimated 78,000 aliens believed to be here from countries of questionable intentions in the war on terrorism. While most who arrive illegally do so from Latin America in order to find work, thousands from the Middle East, Africa, Europe and Asia also are caught each year at the border. Others are discovered later, after they have broken a more seriously enforced U.S. law. In “Invasion: How America Still Welcomes Terrorists, Criminals and Other Foreign Menaces to Our Shores” (2002, Regnery Publishing), author Michelle Malkin chronicles dozens of instances where thugs from foreign lands have waltzed into

the United States and committed crimes and atrocities from drug trafficking to murder, while business leaders, elected officials and the media stand idly by, unwilling to surrender political correctness for the sake of public safety.

It’s not a race issue, says Malkin, a first-generation American and daughter of Filipino parents. “The demand for a more discriminating immigration policy – one that welcomes American Dreamers and bars American Destroyers – is rooted in love of country, not hatred of foreigners,” she writes. “One year after the terrorist attacks, the avenues for death and destruction remain virtually unobstructed.”

“At the border every night, it’s like the Boston Marathon,” McKee says. “How do I know bin Laden isn’t going to be in there? They don’t know who’s in there.”

U.S. Border Patrol agents study staging areas like the corrals south of Cochise County and make daily apprehensions. But there’s a lot of desert between Chula Vista, Calif., and Brownsville, Texas. Agents estimate that three illegals get by for each one caught and sent back, and the newly deported simply hire different coyotes and try again. Skeptics estimate the ratio is

closer to one alien caught for every five who freely pass. Again, no one really knows. Statistics vary depending on who is doing the math and toward what end.

The reason America's southern border is so porous, many agree, is a lack of political will on the U.S. side to provide adequate security. Low pay, even after

"We're under siege," says Iris Lynch, who can see the Mexican border from her backyard. "They say we have more than a million a year coming through. There's no port-a-potties out there. Think about that. Creeks where people used to hike are now littered and filled with human waste. They are everywhere. We button down

every night. I don't know how many hundreds go by at night, and I am not going out there to find out."

The American Legion has several resolutions calling for immigration policy changes, better border security and, if necessary, military presence to support out-numbered U.S. authorities.

But troops on the border is a tough sell in the snow-bird retirement meccas of the deep

Southwest. "When I have talked to our congressman about it, the first comment is, 'Well, you don't want tanks driving down the streets of Green Valley,'" says Randy Graf, Republican House majority whip in the Arizona Legislature. "And I agree. I don't think there's anybody who would want tanks driving down the streets of Green Valley. But we are not talking about tanks. We don't need tanks. We need a presence."

Lacking that, local militia groups have sprung up. A growing corps of private land-owners and civilian watchdogs have taken up videocameras, binoculars, satellite phones and, indeed, arms, in an attempt to protect the borders themselves. They assemble in the desert at regularly scheduled intervals, as others might gather for bowling night, to scan the washes for tracks and listen in camouflage for the footfalls of an illegal population in transit.

It's not a sport, says Chris Simcox of Tombstone, Ariz., who leads a grassroots organization called Civil Homeland Defense, which regularly stalks the border for aliens. "We have assisted the Border Patrol in catching 2,553 people in just over a year," he says, adding that while some Border Patrol agents refer to his group as "birdwatchers," critics call them "vigilantes." Simcox says he and his fold are simply following orders President Bush issued after the terrorist attacks of 2001. "We took the president serious when he said to be vigilant and report suspicious illegal activities. They wanted all of America to get involved in national security. Nobody is doing more than we are, right here on the border, on the front line."

And there's no place like the front line to witness the collision between America's broken immigration policy and its consequences on human lives. "People we have found out here have had no water, have been lost, were abandoned or abused by the smugglers, including children, and mothers carrying their babies," Simcox says. "We have found hundreds of kids coming through in the middle of the night with no water. We have found entire families, entire villages from southern Mexico, trying to cross. I have personally caught people from 26 different countries, including China, Korea, Pakistan, and every Central American and South American country you can name. Hundreds from Poland, and some from Croatia. There is nothing that will boggle your mind more than to walk up to a group of people in the night, sitting on rocks in the desert, and they're European or Asian." Simcox says his group has saved 94 lives in the desert.

Illegal immigration is indeed a deadly risk. More than 2,000 undocumented immigrants died trying to cross into the United States between 1995 and 2002. Nearly 500 died – by causes including drowning, suffocation, homicide and heat exposure – in 2000 alone. "One of our biggest



Cochise County Sheriff Larry Dever says illegal immigration takes more than 30 percent of his budget. Desert deaths, he says, must all be investigated as homicides.

Sept. 11, 2001, drove thousands of Border Patrol agents to other jobs. And while their numbers have been urgently increased since a near-crisis exodus two years ago, authorities cannot stem the tide. Between 1992 and 2000, Border Patrol apprehensions of unauthorized migrants increased from 1.1 million to 1.6 million per year. Last February in southern Arizona, illegal border crossings accelerated again – some say by double or more – after President Bush's early 2004 proposal of a guest-worker program to temporarily legalize millions of undocumented workers, and in advance of a well-publicized June 1 crack-down. In the first three months of 2004, in the Tucson Border Patrol sector alone, more than 200,000 illegal aliens were apprehended, a 50-percent increase over the same period in 2003. The peak season, between the freezing nights of winter and blistering heat of summer, was yet to come.

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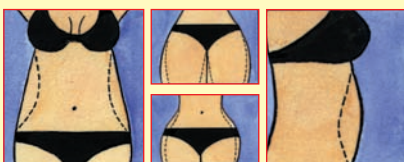


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challenges in law enforcement on the border is that each one of those deaths has to be investigated as a homicide,” says Cochise County Sheriff Larry Dever, who says more than 30 percent of his budget is consumed each year on illegal immigration matters. “It’s a huge commitment of manpower. We had 140 die in the desert last year in the four border counties. To be investigated as a homicide, that means I have to send out my resources to process the scene, figure out who they are, where they came from, how they got there, if there was any foul play, then take them to the medical examiner’s office for an autopsy. Just this year, local mortuaries began refusing to pick up the bodies. They’re not getting diddly squat for it. Plus, (the bodies) are just a mess – most of them have been out there three or four days when they are found. It’s not pleasant. We also know there are hundreds, if not thousands, of unreported sexual assaults. One study suggested 68 percent of all migrants, by the time they reach the Arizona border, are victims of some kind of assault.”

Simcox keeps a lawnchair tucked beneath a mesquite tree at his favorite rocky knoll. There, he has a sprawling view of the washes and gullies that drain toward the San Pedro River. Other members of his group stake out elevated positions so they can easily surround aliens passing below, blind them with spotlights and call in the Border Patrol for pickup. “That’s all we do,” Simcox says. “Once they are sitting down, I go up and say, ‘Hola! Buenos dias!’ I’m not shouting at them or anything. I’m not going to shoot someone. They’re (mainly) just migrant workers. They don’t deserve to die for that.”

“From a national security viewpoint, this has got to be done. You’ve got to stop the drug dealers, the crime, the sex crimes, the slavery, the people dying in the desert. People shouldn’t be dying for a minimum-wage job. This is really an ethnic cleansing. They are herding people over the border because they don’t want to take care of them. Yes, there are jobs here. And yes, we need immigration. Immigration built this

country. However, every wave of immigration before has matched the need. Now, it’s just a free-for-all. You have people coming here, making a mockery of our citizenship. That’s what drives me to this.”

Simcox watches quietly for any sign of movement. Suddenly, a tiny white plane soars overhead. He trains his binoculars on it. It’s a drone – an unmanned aerial vehicle equipped with a camera that relays images back to a high-tech command center in the back of an American Border Patrol van five miles away. There, Glenn Spencer and his civilian crew record who and what they see in the desert and post their findings on the Web site [Americanpatrol.com](http://Americanpatrol.com) – an online forum for illegal immigration information, commentary and video recordings.

The ABP Web site regularly posts eerie images of aliens tromping single-file through the desert in the night. When the immigrants trip a buried sensor and see the little red light on the top of the camera, they turn and scurry back into the brush. “All you have to do is show up, and you will see people,” says

## The American Legion’s positions on illegal immigration

**Threat to National Security.** To reduce illegal immigration’s threat to national security, The American Legion calls for collaboration among all law-enforcement agencies to work together to apprehend, detain and deport those in the United States illegally. “Our country’s enemies recognize and understand that our nation’s failure to control its borders or regulate the right to live in the United States is a weakness and have already, in the case of the acts of terrorism committed on Sept. 11, 2001, exploited that weakness with deadly consequences.” – *Resolution 306, 2002*

**Amnesty.** No matter whether it is called a “legalization,” “regularization” or a “guest-worker program,” forgiveness of those who enter the United States illegally is a costly policy that leads to more, not less, illegal immigration. “Neither the administration or Congress have explained how a massive amnesty program for illegal immigrants will benefit the American public.” – *Resolution 307, 2002*

**College Financial Aid and In-State Tuition.** The American Legion opposes any legislation proposed to provide financial aid and offer in-state tuition rates to illegal immigrants or grant amnesty to those younger than 21 who have lived in America and gone to school five years or more. – *Resolution 308, 2002*

**21st-Century Immigration Policy.** The American Legion supports a U.S. immigration policy that will limit immigration, eliminate some visa categories (such as those for adult offspring and siblings), restrict eligibility for public assistance, implement a nationwide system to determine employment eligibility, and provide funding necessary for effective border management and interior enforcement of immigration laws. – *Resolution 311, 2002*

**Citizenship Naturalization Process.** The Legion opposes any attempts to dilute such requirements as English language skills and knowledge of U.S. history and government in the naturalization process – “all vitally important in affecting a healthy assimilation into our society.” – *Resolution 45, 2003*

**Department of Homeland Security.** The March 2003 incorporation of the U.S. Immigration and Naturalization Service into the Department of Homeland Security leads the Legion to call for strict sanctions against employers who knowingly hire illegal aliens; adequate funds for U.S. authorities to provide border security; the denial of public assistance and unemployment compensation to illegal aliens; no extension or enhancement of legalization opportunities; and free flow of information and technology among agencies tasked with controlling the problem. – *Resolution 42, 2003*



An American Border Patrol drone records desert activity and relays it back to a mobile command center.

Michael King, who works as vice president of technology for Border Technologies, Inc., which operates out of the ABP headquarters. “We just go to the same spot. We don’t even vary it.”

Enough illegal traffic pours through the desert every day, Border Patrol agents could make as many apprehensions as desired, King says. “Tactically, they might be able to see every one of them, but logistically, they can’t deal with it. It’s just way too overwhelming. Thousands of people are coming into this country every night, just in this area here. And this is not a gigantic area.”

Spencer says he believes demonstrations of his unmanned aerial vehicles contributed to funding and plans for two government drones set for deployment in the June crack-down in the remote country of southern Arizona.

Illegal immigration gravitated to the deserts and mountains by design after 1994 when Operation Gatekeeper tightened the border around populated areas of California and Texas. Civil libertarians called the effort by the Immigration and Naturalization Service a “brutal success” that turned border crossing into “the most obvious, most huge,

and systematic violation of human rights occurring on U.S. soil today.” That was the observation of Wayne Cornelius, director of the Center for Comparative Immigration Studies at the University of California-San Diego, at a panel discussion in 2002. He said Gatekeeper failed to reduce the overall number of illegal aliens, tripled the INS budget, and increased deaths at the border. Some activists prefer opening the borders altogether over allowing half-hearted immigration policies to lead people to their deaths. “We must take death out of the migration equation,” states the Rev. Robin

**Immigration Reform.** The inability to control illegal immigration leads to the call for immediate reform, including more and better-trained Border Patrol agents, with hiring preference for veterans; increased collaboration with state and local authorities; immediate deportation proceedings for those without valid visas; requirement that legal aliens carry high-security identification verifiable through a central database; emergency measures to prevent human smuggling and to stop, detain and deport potential terrorists; and, “as appropriate, military resources ... to assist in stopping the flow of illegal aliens into this country.” – *Resolution 40, 2003*

**Student Visas.** A foreign-student tracking system like the former INS Student and Exchange Visitor Information System should be adopted; institutions that do not comply should lose federal loans for foreign students. – *Resolution 39, 2003*

**The Canadian Border.** America’s border with Canada lacks adequate security, and resources are needed. “There are only 1,773 U.S. Customs agents and 350 Border Patrol agents to guard the 4,000-mile United States and Canada border; and ... there are over 9,000 Border Patrol agents guarding the 2,000-mile border between the United States and Mexico.” – *Resolution 38, 2003*

**The Naturalization Process.** The advent of foreign-language naturalization ceremonies, optional ceremonies, and naturalization by mail, leads the Legion to reiterate its stance that English be declared the nation’s official language and that naturalization ceremonies at U.S. District Courts continue to serve as initial steps in the process. – *Resolution 44, 2003*

**Matricula Consular Identification Cards.** The Legion urges Congress and state legislatures to adopt measures to invalidate the cards. – *Resolution 46, 2003*

**Non-Immigrant Visas.** The Legion calls on Congress to establish numerical limits for all visa categories, and for all categories of temporary workers, to prevent labor-market distortions; and that federal authorities be provided the necessary tools to investigate fraud and other unlawful visa activities, deporting those who remain in the country after visas expire; and that “thorough background checks be conducted on all individuals entering the country.” – *Resolution 47, 2003*

**Legal Immigration.** Rapid growth among immigrants, legal and illegal, “has placed great burdens on our nation’s natural resources, housing, schools, medical facilities, government services and national security,” according to The American Legion, as it calls for lower legal immigration limits. – *Resolution 48, 2003*

Hoover, founder and president of a group called Humane Borders, which distributes water in the desert for migrants trying to get into America, much to the chagrin of those who think such activities only encourage illegal immigration.

"The greatest betrayal in history is to open our borders like this to a hostile nation, and there is no question this is a hostile nation – hostile and growing more violent," Spencer argues. "A woman was accosted just a few miles away from here last week. Then a young man whose car overheated was jumped by three Mexicans, who started choking him to death. We've had people accosted, fired at, and the Border Patrol has been in several shootouts, just recently. It's getting violent. Assimilation is in reverse thrust."

Spencer has raised money and spent tens of thousands of his own dollars on monitoring equipment, including a digital computer lab in his home near Sierra Vista, Ariz. His group also helped lead a 115,000-petition rally last spring in Tucson to put the military on the border. Open-borders activists, many wearing masks, came to the rally carrying placards with caustic slogans contending that the American Southwest was originally Aztec territory and should be ceded to Mexico.

At a layup area in rural Cochise County, Henry Harvey – a member of Civil Homeland Defense – sorts through the debris imported from Mexico. He finds backpacks filled with cookies and broken tortillas. A woman's denim jacket. He picks it up and shakes the dirt from it. He will donate it to a shelter in Sierra Vista. He kicks over empty water bottles and pop cans, shakes toothbrushes and razors from plastic bags. "These are not poor, starving people," he grumbles, studying tracks in the

Henry Harvey of Civil Homeland Defense picks through items left at a lay-up area east of Sierra Vista, Ariz. Clothing items in good shape, he says, will be donated to a women's shelter.

road where a car pulled up the night before, and people climbed into unfamiliar cars for a back-seat ride into the idea of America, an idea they are changing.

When Jesus Aguilar came across in the early 1970s, he was a 15-year-old boy from Guanajuato. To him, he was coming from nowhere. The son of a migrant worker who participated in the Bracero Program, which recruited migrant labor into the American Southwest to make up for lost manpower during World War II (the program continued until 1964), Aguilar had no confidence of receiving fair pay for a day's work in Mexico. He remembers how his father's

irregular jobs in America sustained their family and how life on the other side was often spent hungry. "Workers are kept down," he says. "They're never going to get nothing. That's why we are here. America has enough to feed all of Mexico."

About 25 years ago, Aguilar and 16 others followed a coyote into the night. His hands became so numb he could not stuff them into his pockets. The group went for 12 hours straight, buoyed by the promise of America, the likelihood of something better ahead. "My dream was to buy my own washer, my own car, maybe own a watch," he says. "You could work here and have



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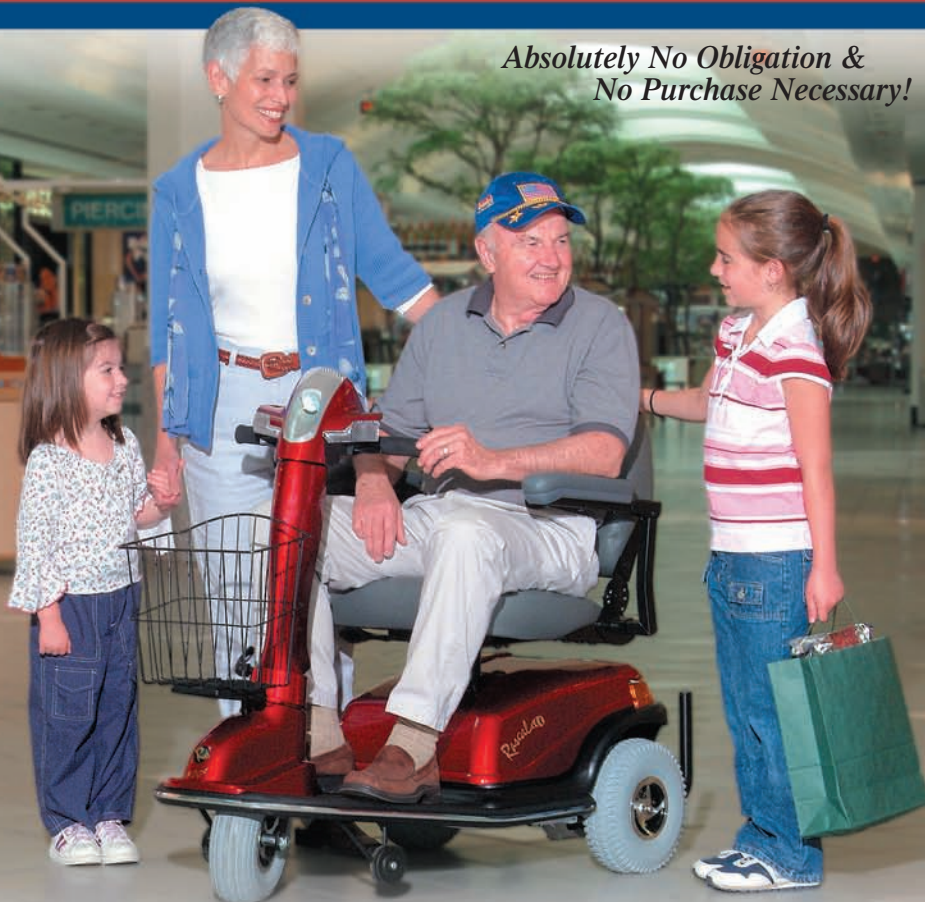
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100 percent more than you could have there. In America, you can eat meat every day. Poor in America is much better than rich in Mexico."

He lived in fear. "Every day, you worry about getting caught," he says. "You drive with no driver's license, and they come up from behind, and you think they will get you." In less than a year, authorities found Aguilar working in an orange grove and deported him to Nogales, where he paid another coyote another \$90 to get him back into the United States. He was not caught again and became a U.S. citizen two years ago. He and his wife have four daughters who will never have to hire smugglers, jump fences or sleep in tool sheds to avoid detection. His 12-year-old daughter Mayomy, whose bilingual skills are sometimes summoned to provide translation at her school, wants to be a teacher when she grows up. She honors her father whose hands, once numb with cold in the desert, are now scarred and leathery from a quarter-century of seven-day work weeks on construction sites in the harsh Arizona elements.

Aguilar says most Mexican immigrants are like him, here to work hard and make money to feed their families. "Go out to the freeway, and you will never see a Mexican out there holding up a sign," he says. "You see the Mexicans down at the Home Depot saying they want to work. If you like to eat, you like to work. I like to work. I never went to school in Mexico. I went to school here and learned some, but I didn't stay. So it was pick and shovel for me."

He finds himself ironically concerned about his family's security amid the changing complexion of illegal immigration in his part of the city. "When I go down to the (grocery store), at times I don't feel good. And I am Mexican. They'll steal whatever they want. Before, you



Jesus Aguilar came to America illegally in the 1970s. He is now a citizen with four daughters "in the top 10 percent of their class." Mayomy, 12, occasionally serves as a school translator.

never saw all the South Americans. Now, you see them from all different countries. We have a lot of problems now. So many people here are banditos who don't care if they go to jail. The government has to find out who are the good ones and get rid of the bad ones." That's easier said than done, he admits, because once deported, "they are just going to try again. I came the same way."

"I can't blame them," says Jeff Johnson, a Phoenix contractor who doubts that any guest worker participating in a U.S. program would voluntarily

return to the home country after a three-year work visit, as suggested in the guest-worker proposal. "Why would I want to go back to a country where there's nothing left for me?"

Graf says illegal immigration easily costs the taxpayers of Arizona \$1 billion a year. "A lot of them came up to work in those plants (built near the border after the passage of the North American Free Trade Agreement)," Graf says. "That was the magnet. Now those jobs are leaving and going to China or Indonesia. Where do the workers go? Do they go back

home and look for a job? Or do they step across the border? The social structure in Mexico is being destroyed by this. You have communities in Mexico where the men are all gone. They have come up here to work, to supposedly send money home. They come up here and start a second family. There are many, many stories about mothers with three or four children, with no income whatsoever, in communities with no men living in them, or very few men. And it's certainly not helping our social structure here either."

"The law-abiding businessman cannot compete," says Republican Rep. Russell Pearce, chairman of the House Appropriations Committee in the Arizona Legislature. "I know a construction contractor who once had 100 employees and now only has five. He refuses to hire people illegally. He pays his taxes. Who is standing up for him while he is being destroyed by those who break the law?"

"There is not a week that goes by that I don't talk to someone in my district who is leaving because they can't take it anymore. The neighborhoods have changed. They have become violent. This isn't about race. This is about a culture that is destroying America, and we had better quit pandering to it."

**The total K-12 expenditure for illegal immigrants costs the states \$7.4 billion a year, enough to buy a computer for every junior high school student nationwide.**

*— Federation for American Immigration Reform*



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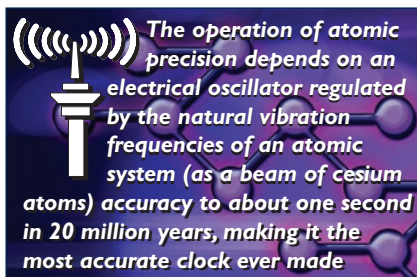
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"What you get is the third-world country they ran away from – nothing but poverty," says Rusty Childress, owner and president of a Buick dealership in a once-affluent part of Phoenix where poor immigrants, many undocumented, have dramatically shifted the demographics. "In the last 10 years, it has gone from 13 percent Hispanic to 43 percent. That's within a three-mile range of the dealership."

He looks across his lot of luxury sedans and leather-seated SUVs, toward the vacant car lot next door. It used to be a Volvo dealership. "Drug busts and drop houses and homicides ..." Childress groans. "Employees are scared to work for us. Customers are scared to do business with us. It just keeps getting worse. The Democrats say there is no problem. The Republicans say there is a problem, but we can't do anything about it."

"There comes a point where you've had all you can take," Pearce says. "The people we elect into positions of public trust fail to do their jobs. It's not just a federal issue. Once they cross that border, it's our neighborhoods, our health-care system, our criminal justice system, our educational system. It's us who pay the price. This is the Trojan horse of America."

Pearce says Phoenix is now in the midst of a 60-percent rise in homicides directly related to human trafficking. One particular incident just last November involved a bloody, running gun battle on Interstate 10 that turned out to be a turf war between two competing coyotes. "Several people were shot and killed. Cars were shot up, all about illegal alien smugglers and illegal aliens. Every day, there is a new incident."

"How do you tie this all up into one nice, neat little package when you have federal legislators and the White House saying they are going to implement another new guest-worker program?" Graf asks. "They have to look at this more broadly, including all the various visas we have – 70-some

different programs. And 40 percent of the people in this country illegally came legally and then just overstayed their visas. If we have no method of controlling legal immigration – and we really don't – there certainly isn't a will or a want in the federal government to try to stop illegal immigration. It's very frustrating."

"Who is the missing person at the party?" Johnson asks. "The federal government. They're not living up to their responsibilities. As the world gets smaller, the problem becomes more glaring. If we had another 9-11 in this country, it would wake people up. Terrorism is waiting to happen, and no one is stepping up."

"America ought to be mad," says Pearce. "In Arizona, our health-care welfare budget – our Medicaid – grew from 2001 when it was just over \$200 million to \$1.2 billion in 2003. It's on the way to

bankrupting the state. This is an invasion, not a trickle. And we are sending mixed messages. We tell them it's illegal to come, but if you do come here, we'll do nothing about it, and there's probably a reward for you at the end of the trek. If I was in Mexico and kept getting these messages, I would fill my backpack and head north, too."

"So who is responsible? America has to share some of that blame. Some, not all of it, because you have a corrupt government in Mexico, which should be fixing its own problems. There should be an incentive to stay in their own country. There isn't. And because the economy here has a bloated welfare system, and the fact that we don't enforce the immigration laws here, people know if they get past the border,

they can feel pretty confident about themselves. When do we stand up for Americans? When do we stand up for the law-abiding citizen? What is government's No. 1 job? Public safety. Protect our liberties, our homes, our properties, our families. They are not doing that. They are failing

miserably. We ought to hold our politicians accountable. Poll after poll shows the American public supports securing the border and putting a stop to illegal immigration. There's a lot that can be done. We're just not doing it."

In the meantime, as illegal immigration metastasizes into more and more states – from the poultry plants of Tennessee to the textile mills of North Carolina and department stores, motels and restaurants all across middle America – the consequences of complacency go largely unweighed.

We simply watch in

bewilderment as the swollen bodies of 19 dead or dying Central Americans are removed from an abandoned, unventilated trailer, left at a roadstop on a 91-degree south-Texas day. We watch from our living-room windows as the coyotes gather again on the desert. And we cannot help but wonder about all the U.S. troops deployed to watch the borders of 100 or more countries around the world, including those of nations that hate nothing more than the idea of America, while thousands of aliens penetrate our own lines every day, confident that eventually their illegal trespasses will be forgiven. 🌿

*Jeff Stoffer is managing editor of The American Legion Magazine.*

*Article design: Holly K. Soria*

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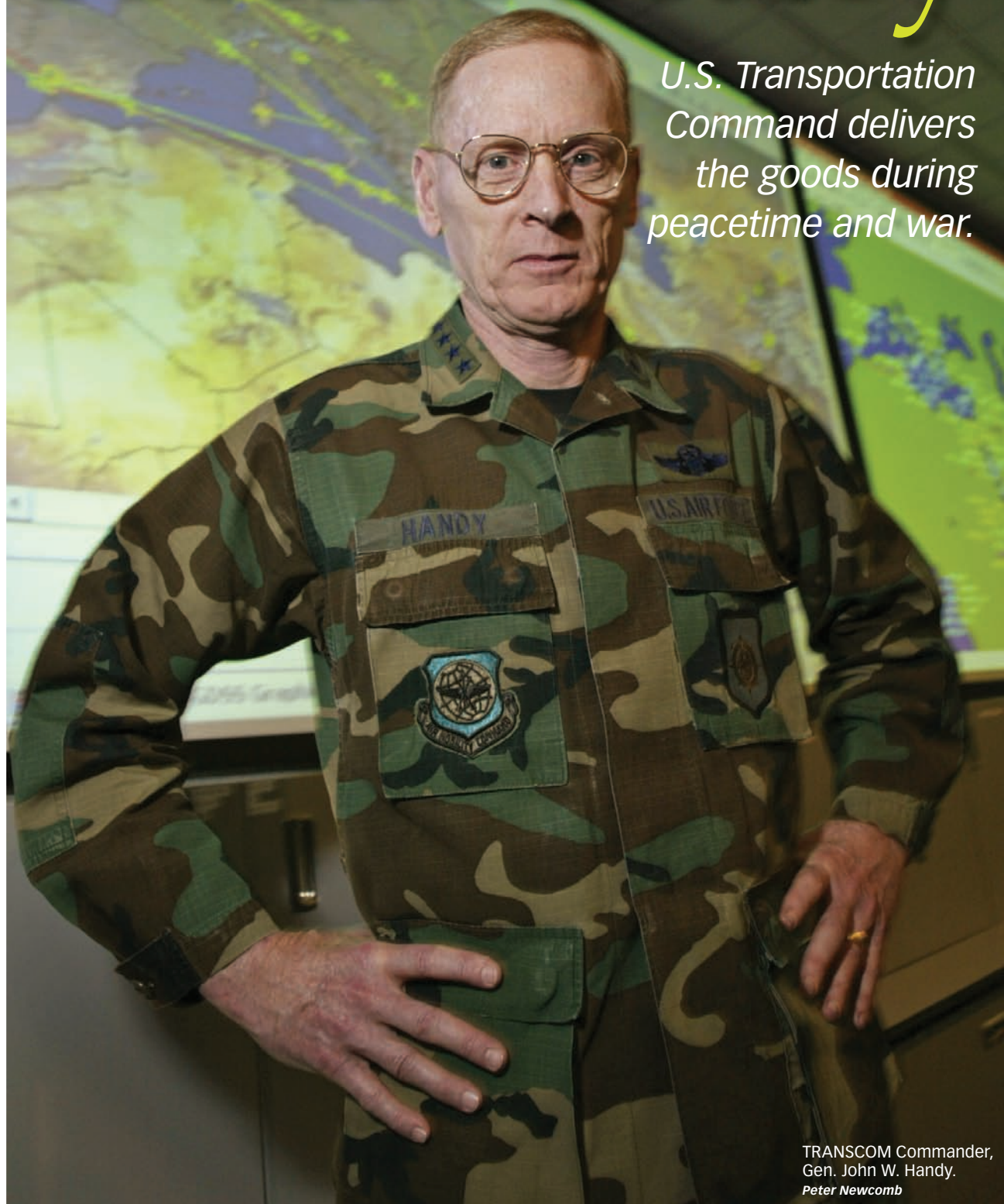
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interview|

# From Factory

*U.S. Transportation  
Command delivers  
the goods during  
peacetime and war.*



TRANSCOM Commander,  
Gen. John W. Handy.  
*Peter Newcomb*

# to Foxhole

Second to military strength, the most visible proof of a nation's superpower status is its global reach. No one has a farther reach than U.S. Transportation Command. Headquartered at Scott Air Force Base, Ill., TRANSCOM is responsible for moving every bullet, bed and bomb from the manufacturer to the end user – or, as TRANSCOM folks like to say, from factory to foxhole. Toss in the challenge of moving more than a million troops to and from a combat zone, and what you have is one of the most massive air, sea and ground movements in history.

As TRANSCOM commander, Air Force Gen. John W. Handy manages a global interservice network of 1,365 aircraft, 87 Navy ships, 2,167 railcars and various Army ground vehicles – the largest transportation organization ever assembled. Last year alone, TRANSCOM troops were on the ground in 151 countries and flew cargo aircraft into even more. *The American Legion Magazine* recently spoke to Handy about TRANSCOM and its adaptation to a wartime environment.

**The American Legion Magazine:** *How has the Iraq war changed TRANSCOM's mission?*

**Gen. John Handy:** Well, we are certainly an awful lot busier than we have ever been in the past. The war in Iraq came right on the heels of our efforts in Afghanistan, and the two endeavors – combined with everything else we do in the world – means that our operations tempo is very, very high. The tempo has been surging so long at such a high level that it now seems like normal operations. We are busier than we ever thought we would be, so it's all a learning process. We've had to completely re-engineer ourselves right in the middle of the war to become a lighter, leaner and a more capable force.

Storm. Supplies often didn't move through the theater, and even when they did, they didn't move as fast as they should have. We must get supplies to the point of consumption, and now we are. We've made tremendous improvements in technology and in-transit visibility with the implementation of plastic radio frequency labels. They not only tell us where the container or pallet is located, they also tell us what items are in the containers.

Another major improvement came on Sept. 16, 2003, when Secretary of Defense Donald Rumsfeld named TRANSCOM the distribution process owner, or DPO. This made us the supply-chain manager for the Department of Defense. What that

means is that at handoff at the airport or seaport, we don't just deliver the shipment to the particular theater and wash our hands and say it's now somebody else's problem. We are now accountable for the entire distribution process. For the first time in the history of DoD, somebody has been given the responsibility to manage and own the distribution process. You don't see mountains of supplies now like we did in Desert Storm and Desert Shield because we have more efficient inter-theater delivery systems. We know we still have problems with intra-theater logistics and we're working on that, too. We are becoming more efficient in the long haul, as well as the short haul.

**TALM:** *Operation Desert Storm had serious logistics problems, with troops in the field physically opening shipping containers to determine their contents. The result: huge stockpiles of wasted supplies dubbed "iron mountains." Is this still a problem?*

**JH:** We know that the intra-theater logistics supply chain really broke down in Desert

## TRANSCOM by the Numbers

Between September 2003 and February 2004, TRANSCOM moved or delivered:

**1,258,517** passengers by air  
**876,739** tons of cargo by air  
**2.2 million** tons of cargo by sea  
**296** ships carrying combat cargo  
**1.79 billion** gallons of fuel by ship  
**222,595** containers worldwide  
**6,957** containers of rations  
**124 million** meals

**TALM:** *TRANSCOM has studied how FedEx, Wal-Mart and other corporations move their products from the factory to store shelves. Tell us about these relationships.*

**JH:** We always look at commercial entities to see how they do their job. There are back-and-forth conversations; we have mutual benchmarks. Over the years,

we've had strong relationships with Federal Express and the U.S. Postal Service. We ask them how they do it, and they ask us how we do it.

But there are big differences. When you ship a package by FedEx, you know what's in the package you're shipping, but FedEx doesn't need to know. They give you a number, and you can track it along the way. In the system I operate, I not only have to give you that tracking number, but I also have to know exactly what's in that package. And when I put a shipping container on a pallet, I also have to know where it is on that pallet. Another big difference is that FedEx has a specific delivery spot, and the receiver isn't going to move. In our case, we have to get the shipment to, say, the supply sergeant with the 101st Airborne who is constantly moving around. And when that supply sergeant orders an MRE (Meals, Ready to Eat), he knows what is coming and where and when it will arrive. Another big difference, of course, is that the FedEx guy isn't in a war zone getting shot at.

We're all in the business of moving things, and we understand each other's capabilities

and challenges. TRANSCOM deals with these challenges and we do it incredibly well, but we continue to learn.

**TALM:** *What is TRANSCOM's biggest achievement?*

**JH:** The designation as Distribution Process Owner was a major achievement. So is the 250,000-person troop rotation from Iraq that we're going through right now. To paraphrase the chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, Air Force Gen. Richard B. Myers, this is one of the greatest logistics feats in the history of the military. I don't know if that is the case, but I will tell you that it's a dramatic demonstration of the U.S. Transportation Command, the Air Mobility Command and their active-duty, reserve and civilian forces – all 162,000 of them. They pull together and do things that ought to amaze everybody. We moved 1.2 million people and 3 million tons of cargo by sea and by air. At one time last year, the Air Mobility Command launched an aircraft every 12 minutes, 24 hours a day, seven days a week for 12 weeks, collectively flying more than 550 million miles. It's almost inconceivable when you think about it.

**TALM:** *What is your biggest challenge?*

**JH:** When you distill everything, it's the people who make things happen. The challenge is making sure we do everything we can do to take care of them. Strip away all the aircraft and the intensity of our operations, and all of our accomplishments, it is still the people. We have to keep a clear focus, not only on the military, but on the families who are behind them. I have civilians here who have been on 12-hour shifts for two years. We don't know what the future holds. We have to be postured to handle challenges that come down the pike.

**TALM:** *The American Legion has about 2.8 million members. What can they do to help TRANSCOM move forward?*

**JH:** The Legion is a wonderful group of Americans who rally for a variety of defense initiatives and programs. They have a great reputation for doing this, and so I ask them to keep on doing what they have been doing because it works. We do outstanding things here, and that message needs to get out any way it can. 🇺🇸

*Article design: Holly K. Soria*

## TRANSCOM's solution to 'frustrated cargo'

Established in 1987 as one of nine unified, or joint service, commands, the U.S. Transportation Command's mission is as simply stated as it is encompassing: "To provide air, land and sea transportation for the Department of Defense both in time of peace and time of war."

It's a straightforward objective, but the global war on terror stressed the mobility system from the beginning. In the first month of the war, more than 90 percent of the Air Force's C-5 and C-17 cargo aircraft were committed to worldwide operations. At times, confusion reigned, and too many supplies were lost, wasted or misdirected once they reached the theater.

In December, TRANSCOM commander Gen. John W. Handy told military and commercial transportation leaders at a logistics conference that the military lacked an efficient system to support the warfighter. As an example, he pointed out that at one point last year Air Force cargo aircraft had delivered 4,500 shipments to Dover Air Force Base, Del. Just one problem: the shipments lacked proper documentation. This is what the Air Force calls "frustrated cargo." Nobody knew what it was, who shipped it or where it was going.

By the time Handy addressed that conference, how-

ever, a fix was already in the works. In September, Secretary of Defense Donald Rumsfeld ordered a mammoth reorganization of the DoD's transportation and supply system. That's when he pointed his finger at Gen. John Handy and tabbed TRANSCOM as "distribution process owner." The idea of appointing a single responsible manager originated with Handy, so when Rumsfeld gave the order, the general moved into action.

Technological improvements have given rise to important breakthroughs such as the advent of radio-frequency labels that are attached to shipping containers. The plastic tags have embedded memory chips containing information about where and when a shipment was picked up, what it contains, and where it is going. This helps TRANSCOM workers identify and locate the smallest item of a particular shipment at any time during the movement.

Now, supply sergeants will receive their order of MREs and ammunition when and where they want them, allowing troops in the field to do a better job fighting the war. By extension, the increased efficiency gives American taxpayers a bigger bang for their wartime bucks.

– Dan Allsup

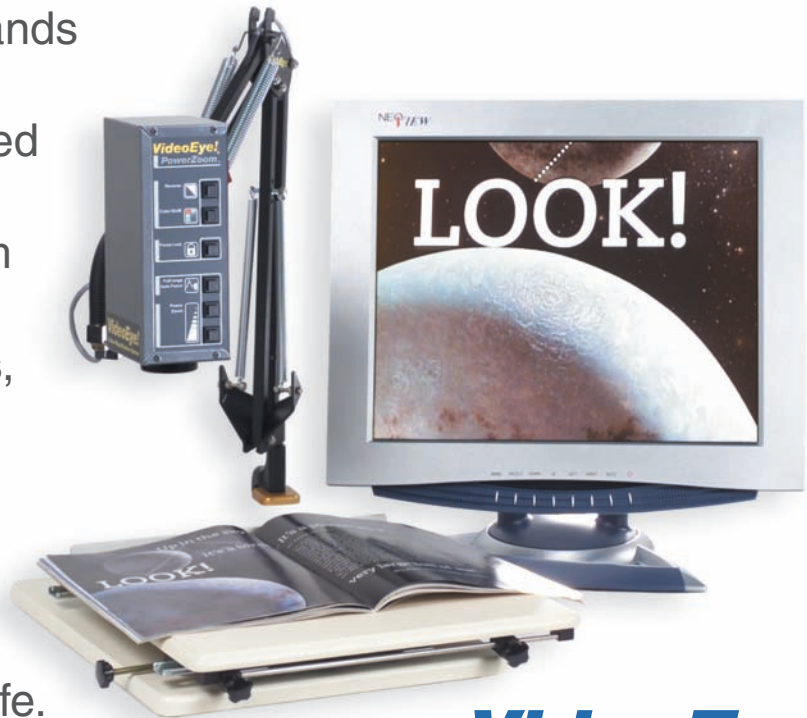
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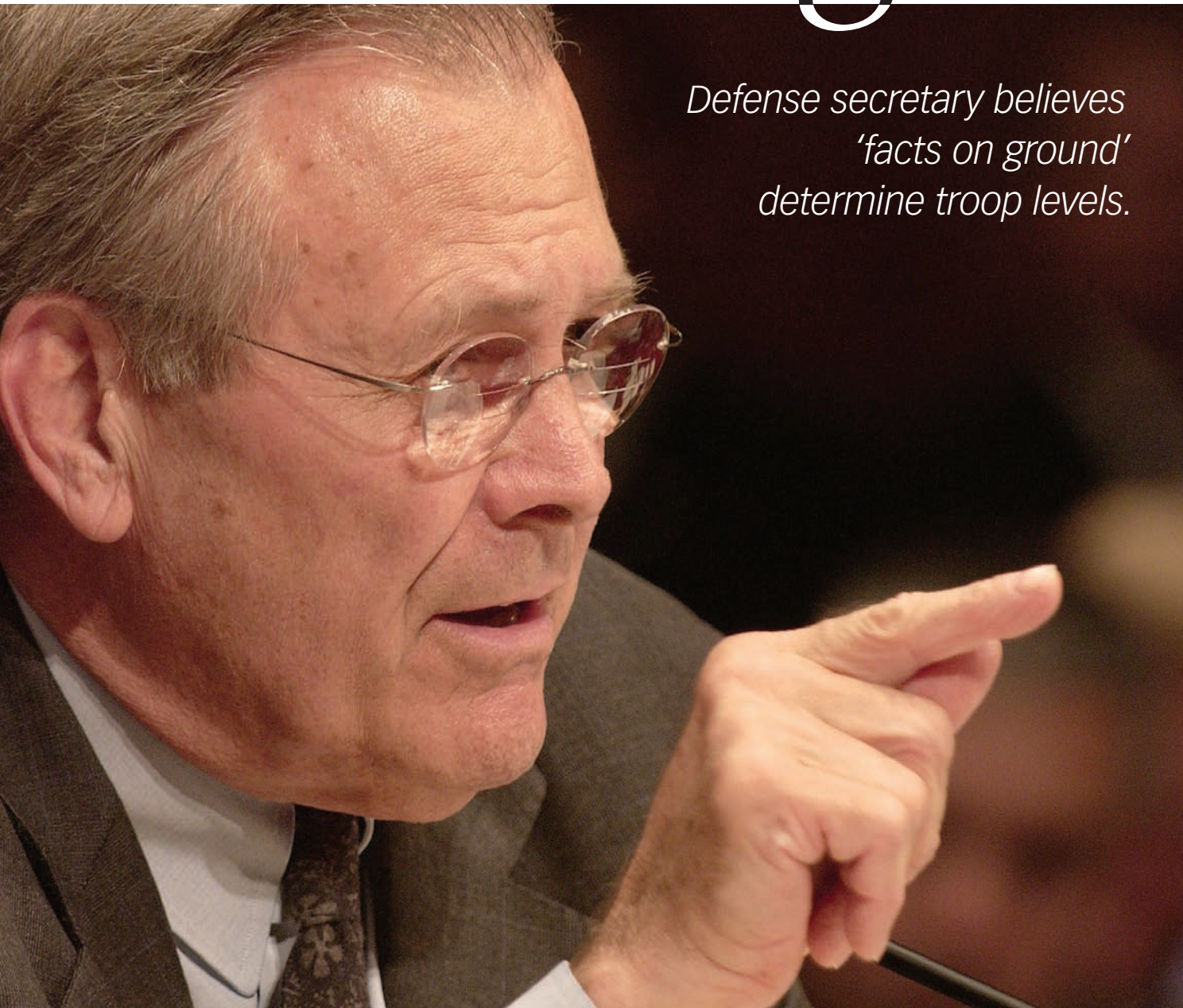
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# Point Man *of the* Pentagon

*Defense secretary believes  
'facts on ground'  
determine troop levels.*



Donald H. Rumsfeld is the most controversial secretary of defense since Robert McNamara. His detractors, some of whom have called for his resignation, portray him as a stubborn, divisive leader who is unwilling to consider the advice of generals and other senior military officers. Rumsfeld's supporters find his bluntness refreshing and point to the quick military victories in Afghanistan and Iraq as crowning achievements in a long and distinguished career. While some say Rumsfeld has the diplomacy of a pit bull, no one considers him a shrinking violet. As *Newsweek* said during the Afghanistan war, "All eyes are on the straight-shooting former Navy pilot who is running the war." Rumsfeld recently spoke with *The American Legion Magazine*.

**The American Legion Magazine:**

*Is America winning the hearts and minds of the Arab world?*

**Donald H. Rumsfeld:** There are things going on in that part of the world that are very positive, and there are things going on in that part of the world that are very negative. The result is a mixed picture. The encouraging thing that is happening is that a number of the states in the region are beginning to provide opportunities to women. They are beginning to take steps to establish parliament in various parts and to give the people a greater voice in the governance of their country. It's uneven, but if one looks back over the past five or 10 years, it's rather clear that that is the direction they are going. I personally think that is a very, very good thing. Countries that don't benefit from the brainpower, the energy, the creativity of some 50 percent of their population have a future that is rather bleak. Countries where the people don't have a stake in the future don't get the commitment of the people to the cause that (needs to be) done. I think that's a good sign. Clearly in that regard the United States and Western countries are seen as representative systems that provide protection for different religions, different ethnic groups and certainly both sexes.

The worst aspect is that the Middle East peace process is not moving forward on a fast track. There are a great many people in that part of the world who recognize the difficulties for the Palestinian people, and there are populations in those countries – for whatever reason – (that) seem to look to the United States as the nation that ought to be able to solve that problem. Of course, the reality is that it's a problem that's been there for many decades. It is impossible for the United States or really any collection of countries to grab both sides by the scruffs of the neck and push them together into an arrangement that they are not willing to make themselves and not willing to live with. So you have that taking place.

The third thing I mention is that we talk about the global war on terror and the reason we do is because terrorism is a weapon that's being used across the globe in Bali, Madrid, Saudi Arabia and the United States. No continent or country is safe from it. I think another way to look at it is that there's a global insurgency taking place and terrorism is being used as a weapon. And within ... there's a struggle between radicals and extremists, vs. moderates. The extremists undoubtedly represent a relatively small minority, but they're

vocal and using terrorism as they are attempting to hijack ... religion. And so there's a civil war taking place, if you will, within that religion – a struggle – and that creates a lot of hostility toward the West and toward different cultures, including the United States, the country that is seen as the leader in the West. So it's a mixed picture that I see out there ... and it's something that we need to recognize and attempt to support the moderates, who are in my view doing the right thing by trying to make progress.

**Q:** *We have seen a recent increase in al-Qaida activity. How important is it to capture or kill bin Laden?*

**A:** Well, it would certainly be a good thing, but in my view it certainly would not end the problem of global terrorism or the extremists and radicals that are attempting to destroy the state system in the world. I don't believe the capture of any single individual is going to be sufficient to deter and dissuade those that are committed to imposing rule by a handful of clerics over the population throughout the globe.

**Q:** *Are we spread too thin in the Middle East to repel possible Chinese or North Korean aggression?*

**A:** The answer to your question is

not my answer, but it's the answer from the Joint Chiefs and the folks here that make military assessments. They periodically review that question and ask, "Do we have the capabilities to fulfill our strategy?" And that is to be able to contribute to homeland defense and to be able to quickly defeat an enemy in one part of the world and simultaneously win decisively in another part of the world. And our repeated looks at those issues have always indicated that we do have those capabilities.

**Q:** *Why extend tours in Iraq if we have enough people?*

**A:** The facts on the ground are what determine the number of troops that the military commanders feel is appropriate. Gen. Tom Franks is the one who came up with the number that he believed was necessary to engage in the major combat portion of it, and he proved to be right. He and Gen. (John) Abizaid are the ones who came up with the estimates of troop levels – U.S., coalition and Iraqi – that they believe would be appropriate to deal with the situation as they thought. As we have moved along closer toward passing sovereignty to the Iraqi government, it's rather clear that the terrorists and the foreign elements and former regime activists – the Fedayeen Saddam and the like – decided to step up their activities ... We've even found correspondence that affirms that. That is to say that communications among terrorists have said they simply have to step up the activities during this period because they'll have less excuse to be engaged in hostility against the Iraqi people after the Iraqi people actually have sovereignty. So when Gen. Abizaid looked at that, he said that he thought the 112,000 or 113,000 U.S. forces, coupled with the coalition forces, and the current state of play with respect to the Iraqi forces, was probably not sufficient and he asked that another – I believe it was 15,000 to 20,000 – troops be available during the period that he anticipated hostilities would be at a

higher level. We were in the middle of the crossover ... that is to say the 115,000 troops were leaving, and 115,000 were coming in over a six-month period, and the easiest way to do that would be to just retain some of those who were there. And so, I think it was something like 18,000 or 19,000 of the troops, many of whom were volunteers but some of whom were clearly not, were asked to extend in Iraq for up to 90 days and tours up to 120 days, as I recall, and the hope is ... correction, the *fact* is that to the extent that that higher level is going to be needed beyond that period of time we would bring folks in from the rest of the world to replace them so they would not have to be extended again. As the president said repeatedly, we intend to provide the military commanders the level of forces they believe are necessary to do the job in Iraq. So it's possible that the number could go down. It's possible that it could stay the same. It's also possible that it could go up.

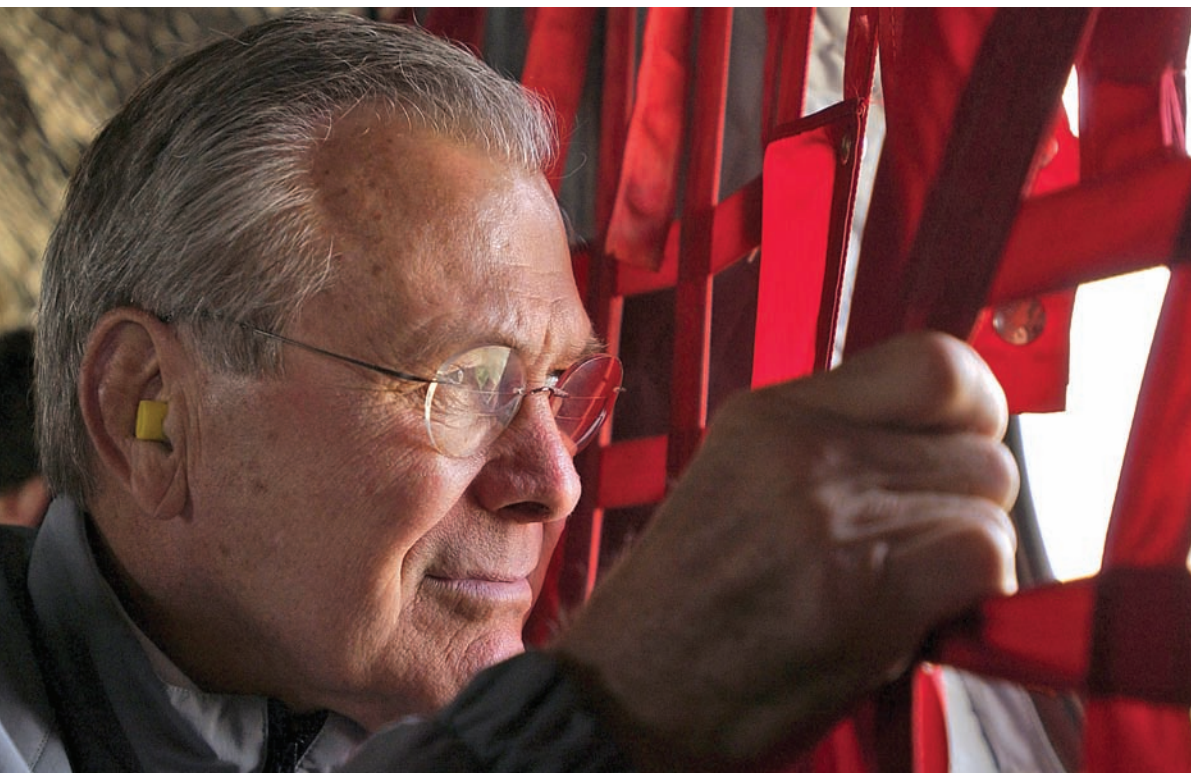
**Q:** *What role would you like to see The American Legion play regarding national security?*

**A:** Well, I think The American Legion and other veterans groups do a wonderful job in helping the American people understand the role of the armed services historically, understand the role of the armed services today and the truly wonderful role the men and women are doing, not just in Iraq but in Afghanistan, the horn of Africa and many other places around the globe, including the Balkans. We're living in a time when many Americans never served in the military and some may not even know people in the military. When I was a young man, everybody for the most part knew people in the military. My father served in the Navy, and I served in the Navy as a pilot, and my dad had been in World War II out on a carrier, and our family was steeped in the importance of the armed services and the role they play. Today, fewer people have those experiences and, as a

result, your fine organization can do a lot to assist people in communities and neighborhoods across the land to have that personal contact and relationship and understanding.

**Q:** *Have the media and some politicians blown the prison-abuse scandal out of proportion, and does it make it more difficult for the rest of the troops to do their jobs?*

**A:** You know, when I talk to military commanders over there and I go over to visit and meet with the troops, I come away with a feeling of conviction and confidence on their part, absolute conviction that we cannot be defeated on the battlefield; that our troops are doing a wonderful job at not just providing security but assisting with schools and hospitals and clinics and essential services and so many other aspects of life. I come back here, and I turn on the television and read the press and you feel hand-wringing and despair ... pessimism about the whole thing because of the impression people get from reading and watching television. Now, there's a disparity between the two, and it's a glaring disparity. And the question is, "Where is the truth?" in those two different pictures of what is taking place over there. I think part of the problem here is that if people thought about history, if they thought about what happened in Japan after World War II, what happened in Germany after World War II ... What about these other countries when they tried to move from a vicious dictatorship to a representative system? What about the United States when we made that path? (Thomas) Jefferson was talking about the move from where we were, toward a democracy when he said, 'We ought not to expect to be transported on a feather bed.' Never in history has it been easy. It's always been tough. It's always cost lives. And frankly, there's always been ugliness and difficulty, real tough difficulty, and that's what we're seeing in Iraq. That's what we've seen in Afghanistan. But it



Rumsfeld  
peers through  
the window of  
a CH-47E  
Chinook  
helicopter as it  
flies over Iraq.  
**U.S. Air Force**

works. Think of the progress that's been made. It's dramatic. My gut is that if you think about what the alternatives are to what we're doing ... The alternatives are civil war, anarchy, breaking the country into pieces, religious or ethnic cleansing or some type of new Saddam Hussein taking over the country.

I was just thinking about D-Day and the anniversary. This is the first war where we've had 24-hour news, seven-days-a-week newscasting and the constant bombardment of negative images. Look what D-Day would have looked like. The gliders – many of them crashed and landed in the wrong location. People were blocked at the bottom of Pointe du Hoc. (Think of) the criticisms. They would have been called back for congressional hearings. It all would have been on television.

You asked if it was disconcerting or something to that effect. I think this is a real test for us. First, I have a lot of confidence in the American people. I have got a feeling that they have a very good center of gravity and that we will

be able to fight and win a struggle like this, which is a tough one. It's a tough business, and it just breaks your heart to see Americans giving their lives and coming home wounded in this struggle. On the other hand, I think that despite 24-hour news and the seven-days-a-week bombardment ... we're going to get through this period, and we'll look back on it and say, "Isn't that amazing?" Notwithstanding the disparity between what is actually taking place over there and the impressions that were left here at home, we got through it. I think that's what will happen. But you asked, "Is it tough?" You bet it's tough. Is it discouraging? I was with a young soldier, oh, I guess he was about 24 or 25. Two weeks he has been back from Iraq, and he was so proud of what's going on there and so stunned by what is going on here and what he sees and reads and hears and the impression here. The same has been true of congressmen and senators that have gone over there. They've come back and noted the dramatic contrast. Now, does that make

it harder? Yes. But does our country have a sufficiently strong rib cage to get through this period? I think we can.

**Q:** *Is there anything else you would like to say to America's veterans?*

**A:** Well, I would. I was at Arlington (National Cemetery) Memorial Day. There were so many veterans. And I was at the dedication of the World War II Memorial. I had a chance to talk to a lot of veterans, and the dedication they feel for this country is deep and real. I have been told by a number of them that as they moved around Washington, D.C., over the weekend, people bought their dinners ... walked up to them in the street and shook their hands or didn't charge them for cab rides, or whatever, as a way to tell them how important a role they played. The spirit, decency and patriotism that they bring to our society is critically important and critically needed. 🌿

*Interview: John Raughter*

*Article design: Doug Rollison*



# Compassion *at Death's Door*

BY KEITH E. RENNINSON

*For a father and son, hospice workers  
provide peace amid grief.*

Mom endured a lot in three months: two three-week hospital stays, several bumps on the head from falls, countless tests, X-rays, MRIs, catheters and injections. It was late on a hot, humid August afternoon when Dad and I walked into the hospice; Mom arrived earlier in an ambulance from our rural Colorado home.

In her room, a team of nurses and aides helped Mom into bed. Fear and confusion showed on her 84-year-old face. She knew why she was here. Her dark, weary eyes darted from one attendant to another as she tried to comprehend what was happening: the taking of blood pressure and heart rate; questions relating to medication, current condition and health history; the storing of her clothes and personal items; and explanations of her new daily routine in this strange and frightening place. We would make eye contact, and I tried to appear reassuring. Dad looked at me, slowly shaking his head.

Mom suffered severe diarrhea and vomiting from the side effects of 15 different drugs. She had lost more than 10 pounds. Congestive heart failure wasn't allowing enough blood to exit her heart, so she was pale and puffy from water retention.

The room's bright overhead light seemed dim as the RN on duty asked a multitude of questions about Mom's health history, allergies and current problems. The pressure of the moment made me feel small and helpless. I could see the deep sadness and concern in Dad's eyes. He was losing his best friend of 59 years.



Ross Jones

I was losing my mother, and I felt out of control, sad and scared.

As I looked around Mom's room, I found a private bathroom, a double-door closet with drawers, a 24-inch television, an armchair and a recliner. On the barren, beige walls were two oil paintings of landscapes with children at play and, oddly, a large, round black-and-white clock. One side of the room was all windows with a view of trees and bushes surrounding the facility. Amid the bushes sat a clear, tubular, six-seat bird feeder. Mom loved birds, and over the next two months, that feeder entertained her with visiting black birds, sparrows and chickadees.

The nurse on duty assured us they would do everything to make Mom comfortable but that she would be confused by her new surroundings for a few days. I felt a strange sort of physical and mental tunnel vision occur as I tried to take it all in.

The level of activity surrounding us seemed so busy and strange. With all the relatives visiting the hospice's other 17 patients, we felt crowded. It was dark and late when Dad and I

walked in silence to the parking lot. Leaving her that first night was hard.

The next day, I learned more about hospice care. The staff on most shifts consists of two or three registered nurses, several licensed practical nurses, and two or three nurses' aides. These professionals administer medications; take blood pressure, pulse and temperature; and monitor patients' conditions. On weekdays, one or two

volunteers assist by answering the phone, washing dishes and assisting with patient care. The hospice has a kitchen where three different chefs rotate during the month, catering to patients' various diets.

Early on the third day, a social worker named Ann took Dad and me aside and explained how the hospice functions during the process of dying.

"Realize that lifesaving techniques will not be used; instead, methods will be initiated to help Clara die as comfortably and peacefully as possible," Ann softly said. "This can take a few days or a number of weeks. It's all up to Clara; she will go when she is ready. We will do everything we can to make her comfortable during the process."

Hard words to hear, though deep down I felt relief. This would be a process involving all of us, not just Dad and I alone. An only child, I knew Dad would lean on me.

Ann took us on a guided tour of the modern, L-shaped building. Situated in the elbow of the "L" were staff offices, storage rooms, the kitchen, a dining room, and a large living room with a fireplace,

couches and telephones. Each wing had nine separate rooms, showers, and linen and supply closets. A waiting room was at the end of each wing for visitors to rest, make phone calls, watch TV or sleep.

Near the main entrance, a large aquarium housed a wide assortment of colorful tropical fish. On the opposite wall was a sculpture of an aspen tree with gold and silver leaves, each imprinted with the name of a patient who had lived and died in the hospice.

Over the course of the next eight weeks, Dad and I spent many hours each day with Mom. We took her for wheelchair rides around the hospice grounds, where she could smell the roses, talk with the resident rabbit living in bushes near the rear entrance, and soak up what little life had to offer in this limited space.

One day, Dad took Mom for a car ride to their favorite part of Chatfield Reservoir, south of Denver. They watched the birds and boaters, enjoying the fresh air. After a while, they had a bite of lunch and drove to our small town, Louviers, 15 miles further south. Mom wanted to see it one last time.

"I'd love to go inside to visit my home, but I won't want to leave," Mom told Dad, a tear trickling down her withered cheek.

We got to know the hospice personnel by name, hearing about their families, pets, homes, aspirations and goals. All wore tennis shoes, smocks and the occasional sweater when the air conditioning worked too well. They came to know the little quirks of Mom's personality; her likes and dislikes became a part of their daily routine. They treated her as if she belonged to their own families.

I still can't fathom how these men and women function, confronting death on a daily basis as they do. They empty bedpans, change soiled nightgowns, mop bathroom floors, change bed linens, deliver food and medications, and bathe patients, all with a smile and occasional joke. They work long



Ross Jones

hours, arriving and sometimes leaving when it's dark.

Each morning, a nurse woke Mom with a hug and kiss on the cheek, opening the curtains and bringing a hot breakfast. Every few days she showered in a specially prepared bathroom. The aides helped her bathe and washed her hair. On alternate Mondays, a volunteer beautician gave haircuts or perms to help female patients feel pretty.

Also on Mondays, Wade came in. Wade is a large man in his late 40s, with a bushy mustache, whose mother and wife died at this hospice. Ever since, he has been a volunteer, playing his acoustic guitar and singing for the patients. If you can only hum a few bars or know just the words of an old song, Wade can play it. Mom had been at the hospice only three days when Wade first appeared at her door.

"Good afternoon, Clara," he said. "My name is Wade, and I love to sing and play my guitar for the patients. May I play

something for you?"

"Oh, yes," Mom said, eager to be entertained.

Wade played "Amazing Grace," "Rocky Mountain High" and a few others. He learned from an aide that Mom and Dad celebrated their 58th wedding anniversary the day before, so he played a few more songs Mom requested. Dad sat next to Mom, and they held hands as he sang. Seeing Mom so happy and sad at the same time was difficult, but Wade made Mom and Dad feel special. That was what counted.

Other patients were more critically ill than Mom. The average stay in a hospice is less than a week, so we would see new patients arrive, relatives come to visit and sometimes, by the next day, the room empty once more. Seeing this was difficult for Mom.

Knowing she needed something to do, Mom came up with a little job of her own. She took sheets of paper from a small notepad and wrote biblical

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Ross Jones

passages or positive greetings on each one, then attached sealing stickers of flowers, puppies or balloons, and asked the chef or an aide to hand them out to other patients. I watched her arthritic hands struggle to scribble the words, but she was determined to help the other patients feel better.

Over time, the staff has learned to recognize the signs of imminent death, things the rest of us wouldn't notice. In Mom's last 10 days, they told us of the changes taking place. They hugged us and often placed a hand on Dad's shoulder when they noticed the tears rolling down his cheeks. Some stayed at an arm's length to safeguard themselves from the pain of loss. Others teared up themselves.

Dad and I served in the military during wars of our youths and have seen death up close. Before Vietnam, I worked as an orderly at St. Luke's Hospital in Denver while attending college, seeing death on a regular basis. But this was different. This was my mother. It was so close.

Time became crucial, so I would bring my laptop computer to work while Mom slept. Years earlier, Dad had learned to knit and made many colorful sweat-

ers, stocking caps, scarves, vests and slippers for Mom and me. By the time our stay at the hospice ended, Dad had knitted booties for 35 staff members. He later calculated that he knitted almost 140,000 stitches in two months.

You can't help but become close to people like those who worked at our hospice: the short, bubbly aide who giggled all the time; the quiet but deeply caring nurse who knelt beside the bed to hold Mom's hand and talk about God; the pair of nurses who had worked together so long they provided care in concert, without speaking a word; the chef who made lunch for Dad when she knew he hadn't eaten; and the male nurse who lived in the mountains and shared stories of seeing deer or fox on his drives to work. They all acted with love and compassion, knowing what must soon happen.

After two days of constant pain for Mom, the staff signaled that the end was near. She went to sleep one night and remained in a coma-like state the entire next day. Dad and I decided we wouldn't leave that night. About 10:30 p.m., he curled up on a sofa in a visitor's area at the end of the hall near Mom's room. I laid

back in the squeaky leather recliner next to her bed.

Just before midnight, I laid awake watching Mom sleep and breathe. At that time of night, the hospice is quiet, and the lights are dimmed. All I could hear was her breathing, so rhythmic, yet strained and raspy. Suddenly, I noticed she was laboring, almost gasping. I rushed to get Dad. When we returned, Dad sat down next to her and took her hand in his. She took four quiet, shallow breaths and slipped softly away.

Slowly, the late-night staff all entered the room to say goodbye. Some cried; others were quiet. They hugged and consoled Dad, me and one another before leaving to care for other patients.

Dad and I faced long rides to our separate homes that night, but the ordeal was over. Without the women and men at the hospice, it would have been much more difficult. 🌿

*Keith E. Renninson is a freelance writer living in Littleton, Colo. He may be contacted at [krenninson@msn.com](mailto:krenninson@msn.com).*

*Illustrations: Ross Jones*

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Dept. 105

# *The* Forgotten President

*Never widely popular as a leader,  
Franklin Pierce still gets little respect.*

BY ARTHUR G. SHARP

In 2000, nine years before the bicentennial of President Lincoln's birth, the federal government established the Abraham Lincoln Bicentennial Commission Act in order to educate people about the 16th U.S. president and his place in history. Paradoxically, the 200-year anniversary of the birth of another former U.S. president, Franklin Pierce, falls in 2004, and no one in the nation's capital is paying much attention. Perhaps that is to be expected for a president some people mistake for a car.

I asked 73 college students to name which of four Pierces served as the 14th president of the United States: Pierce Arrow (a car), Jimmy Pearsall (a former major-league baseball player), Pierce Brosnan (an actor best known for his roles as James Bond) or Franklin Pierce. The car won. The correct answer, Franklin Pierce, drew the fewest votes. The confusion pretty well sums up his one term as president from 1853 to 1857.

Pierce's lack of recognition should not be surprising, considering some of his claims to fame as president are hardly political milestones. For example, he was the first U.S. president to deliver his inaugural address completely from memory, and the first to have a Christmas tree, central heating, and a bathroom with hot and cold running water in

the White House. During his tenure, the first stamped envelopes and perforated postage stamps were used. He managed to get arrested, while an incumbent, for running over an old woman with his horse. The case was dropped due to insufficient evidence. Pierce was the only elected president who sought but did not win his party's nomination for a second term.

Pierce's presidency was not totally without merit, however. He assumed office at a time when the United States was aggressively pursuing a policy of expansion through purchase, war or annexation, and as it engaged in a national debate over slavery. It is to be expected, then, that Pierce's significant activities involved expansion and slavery issues.

**Presidential Challenges.** Pierce's first notable act as president was the Dec. 30, 1853, Gadsden Purchase. The United States bought from Mexico, for \$10 million, a 29,640 square-mile piece of land in the southern parts of current-day Arizona and New Mexico, which still marks the boundary in that region between the two countries.

Early in 1854, Pierce signed into law the Kansas-Nebraska Act, which effectively repealed the Missouri Compromise of 1821. This set in motion a string of events that significantly contributed to the onset of the Civil War. Under the terms of the compro-

mise, Maine was admitted to the United States as a non-slave state, while Missouri came in as a slave state. Of course, the issue is a lot more complicated – as was the Kansas-Nebraska Act, which declared that settlers of new territories could “form and regulate their domestic institutions in their own way.” Basically, they could choose whether or not to allow legal slavery. Pierce left office long before the debate was resolved, but he had other issues to deal with in the meantime.

One was the Treaty of Kanagawa, signed March 31, 1854, which established peace, friendship and trade between the United States and Japan. Actually, Pierce just happened to be in the right place at the right time. Negotiations had begun during the presidency of Millard Fillmore, Pierce's predecessor. Japan was not exactly enthralled about some of the conditions, which involved future U.S. demands. Eventually, the two countries went to war, albeit 87 years later. A rule of thumb applied to Pierce's activities in office: he created problems that eventually led to wars.

Much as the challenges presented by the Kansas-Nebraska Act figured into the onset of the Civil War, the furor over the ambitions among some U.S. expansionists to acquire Cuba by any means possible indirectly led to the





Courtesy Cigarlabelgazette.com

Spanish-American War of 1898. It started as the seizure of a U.S. merchant vessel and escalated into an international incident, a minor scandal for Pierce and a potential war with Spain.

On Feb. 28, 1854, Cuban authorities seized a U.S. merchant ship, the *Black Warrior*, in Havana's harbor, allegedly because of an error in the manifest. At the time, Spain owned Cuba. Naturally, Americans – particularly the expansionists – did not take kindly to the seizure. Hawks in Congress strongly suggested that the country should go to war with Spain and take Cuba by force, or buy it. The situation became an unwanted problem for Pierce.

Pierce authorized his minister to Spain, Pierre Soulé, to offer \$130 million in exchange for Cuba. He directed Soulé to meet first with the American ministers

to Great Britain and France to develop a plan to wrest Cuba away from Spain. The result of the Oct. 9, 1854, meeting in Ostend, Belgium, was the secret Ostend Manifesto to the State Department suggesting the “buy” or “war” options.

Folks in the northern states learned about the dispatch and labeled it as nothing more than a ruse for the government to expand slavery by acquiring the island. The government demurred but withdrew the manifesto. Needless to say, Spain was not too happy about the situation, either. Consequently, Pierce dropped his plans to acquire Cuba. Once again, he had unwittingly created a situation that would remain unresolved for years. It wasn't until 1898 that Spain relinquished Cuba as the result of the Spanish-American War. Cuba became an indepen-

dent country; the United States never did acquire it.

The Ostend Manifesto was the climactic event in Pierce's presidency, which was just as well. He was not happy in Washington and for good reason. After all, his private life was not much better than his political life. How did this man ever get to be president of the United States? Even the years leading up to his election often resembled a comedy of errors – and terrors.

**Road to Presidency.** Nothing in Pierce's early life suggested he would become president. He was born in Hillsborough, N.H., on Nov. 23, 1804. Eventually, he attended Bowdoin College in Maine. Pierce was not exactly a model student. During his second year, he had the lowest grades in his class. However, he was determined, if nothing else.

He began taking his studies seriously and rebounded to graduate third in his class. He returned to New Hampshire after graduation to study law and pursue a career in politics.

Pierce experienced a rapid rise in his political career. He served in the New Hampshire legislature as a representative from 1829 to 1832, including two years as speaker. Then it was on to Washington to serve as a congressman from 1833 to 1837 and as a senator from 1837 to 1842. Nothing seemed to curb his rise in politics, not even his wife, Jane Means Appleton, whom he married against her family's wishes Nov. 10, 1834.

Mrs. Pierce was not exactly a supportive political wife. In fact, when the Democratic Party named Pierce as its presidential candidate in 1852, she fainted. That was not the first time she had placed a black cloud over his political plans. That cloud, combined with Pierce's personal flaws, often threatened his ambitions.

A heavy drinker, Pierce suffered from depression. Eventually, his drinking contributed to his death. Jane and Franklin had three children. Their first died three days after birth.

Shortly thereafter, in 1842, their second son died of typhus. That same year, Pierce retired from his position as a senator due in part to Jane's distaste for the political life. He exchanged his political career for a military uniform to fight in the Mexican War.

Pierce was a capable soldier. He rose to the rank of brigadier general, serving under Gen. Winfield Scott. Pierce was wounded during the war, after which he returned to New Hampshire to resume his law practice. He and Jane lived there happily for a while, until the siren of politics lured him back to Washington, somewhat by default.

The Democratic Party could not settle on a candidate for president in 1852. The party's convention was a bit contentious. Finally, on the 49th ballot, the Democrats selected Pierce over Lewis Cass, Stephen Douglas and James

Buchanan, primarily because they could not reach a consensus on any of the other three. His nomination did not please many people, especially Jane and their sole remaining son, Benjamin, upon whom she doted. But, Pierce wanted to assume the presidency, so he and Jane visited Newport, R.I., for a short vacation and to discuss his future. While there, Jane received a letter from Benjamin in which he said he hoped his father would not be elected. The voters disappointed him: Pierce won the election handily.

Pierce earned 254 electoral votes to only 42 for his closest opponent and former Army commander, Winfield Scott. A third contender, Free Soil candidate John P. Hale, failed to attract much interest. No doubt Pierce knew the feeling. After all, he was the Democrats' fourth choice for the nomination. Nevertheless, Pierce, the dark horse, crossed the finish line first. The rest is history – albeit all-but-forgotten history.

**Road to Obscurity.** Pierce's time in Washington was anything but happy. First, another major tragedy afflicted the family. On Jan. 6, 1853, they were traveling by train to the funeral of a family friend when the car in which they were riding derailed. Thirteen-year-old Benjamin, their only remaining child, died in the wreck. That put a damper on the inauguration ceremonies, which Jane did not attend. They had no inaugural ball. But that did not stop Pierce from throwing a curve at the swearing-in ceremony.

Pierce became the first president in U.S. history to refuse to swear the presidential oath. For unexplained religious reasons, he simply affirmed it, not under oath – a peculiar way for a president to begin his term in office. Then again, little was conventional about Pierce's presidency.

Pierce had a knack for lining himself up on the wrong side of controversial issues. That penchant led to his defeat at the Democratic Party's 1856 National



## Pierce Remembered

**Franklin Pierce College**, Rindge, N.H.  
**Franklin Pierce Bicentennial Web page**, [www.franklinpierce.ws](http://www.franklinpierce.ws)

**"Franklin Pierce: Defining Democracy in America" Exhibition**, New Hampshire Historical Society's Tuck Library, July 3, 2004 to Feb. 6, 2005.

**Two-volume biography.** "Franklin Pierce: New Hampshire's Favorite Son" (Plaidswede, June 2004); "Franklin Pierce: Martyr to the Union" (2006).

Convention. The party rejected him because of his close association with the slavery issue. He was perceived as a pro-slavery president, based in part on his stance in the Nebraska-Kansas situation, and on his tacit recognition of William Walker as president of Nicaragua, a controversial figure who set himself up as a dictator in 1855 and promptly opened Nicaragua to slavery. That was a bit much for the Democrats. They nominated James Buchanan for president; he replaced Pierce in 1857.

Franklin Pierce returned to New Hampshire after his term expired and lived out his life in relative obscurity. He died Oct. 8, 1869, in Concord, N.H., from cirrhosis of the liver. Unlike Lincoln, Pierce's memory is nearly forgotten, and his life is often overlooked or misunderstood, even by the people in his home state.

New Hampshire did not erect a statue to him until 1914, and no Pierce presidential library exists. The bicentennial of Pierce's birth is an opportunity to reopen the book on this enigmatic man who may not have been the most successful president in U.S. history – but at least he was a president, not a car. 🍷

*Arthur G. Sharp is a freelance writer living in Connecticut.*

*Article design: Doug Rollison*

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## VA'S SPACE ODYSSEY

*Mandatory funding would fuel the 18-year ride to CARES.*

BY PAUL MORIN

**T**he CARES process isn't yet over, nor should it be. In fact, it's barely lifted off.

The decision announced in Las Vegas on May 7 by VA Secretary Anthony Principi gave long-awaited shape to the massive VA health-care overhaul envisioned by the process known as CARES (Capital Asset Realignment for Enhanced Services). The decision is a bold step toward reducing the future cost of operating VA's galaxy of health-care properties.

But it is only a step, and an early one, in a journey VA anticipates will lead America's veterans to the year 2022. By that time, according to CARES, the annual cost to manage excess space in the VA system will have fallen from \$3.4 billion to \$750 million a year. Of course, the bigger prize will be a more efficient system where dollars otherwise wasted on empty buildings and sprawling compounds will become available to pay for doctors, nurses and medicine.

CARES envisions a wide range of new construction projects, consolidations, closures, mission changes and plans for increased use of outside contractors. As those initiatives materialize between now and 2022, a new VA health-care system will emerge. Aside from the bricks and mortar, CARES will accelerate a shift in

the veteran health-care paradigm, decentralizing more of it and forging new and expanded partnerships with outside providers, medical-school affiliates and the Department of Defense.

Eighteen years is a long-distance projection, roughly the same span that connected World War II with the Vietnam War. In that amount of time – the Korean War is a good example of this – much can happen to affect predictions for veteran health-care demand. Wars can happen. And wars change the numbers.

The CARES package is based on a demand peak in about 2012, followed by a 10-year decline. Army Chief of Staff Peter Schoomaker says today's war on terrorism may "never go away in our lifetime." So, the predicted decline is by no means a lock. What if hostilities escalate? What if there's a draft? What if chemical or biological weapons create complicated new medical issues for soldiers and veterans? Bureaucrats have wrongly predicted future veteran numbers and needs since "the war to end all wars" concluded in 1918.

The task of adequately funding the VA health-care system of the future is likewise daunting and filled with variables. According to CARES, VA calculates that it needs \$6.1 billion in the next half-dozen years to rebuild the system. Only about one-fifth of

that funding is in the 2005 budget request. Future appropriations will depend on lobbying. That's familiar territory. Veterans will inevitably need to remind elected officials that CARES is *an addition* to the VA budget, *not an offset*. Such reminders are necessary when funding comes on a discretionary basis.

As dollars come and go without clear regard for demand changes, actual cost of care or inflation, veterans will have to battle for future funds to build hospitals and clinics, as proposed by CARES, in the years ahead, while not sacrificing patient care.

Veterans need to defend against unbridled outsourcing. In doing so, they can remind elected officials and the public of VA's role in civil defense and as a backup for the U.S. military. Let us not forget – as feasibility studies weigh the pros and cons of shrinking VA's footprint and sending more care to the private sector – that these hospitals are America's safety net in the event of a natural disaster or attack on our own soil.

More than 100 major construction projects are identified in the CARES decision. Included are new medical centers in Las Vegas, Denver and Orlando, Fla., along with 156 new outpatient clinics listed as priorities before 2012. These are forward-thinking illustrations of VA's commitment



VA Secretary Anthony J. Principi, flanked by top leaders of veterans service organizations from around the country, including American Legion National Commander John Brieden, (seated, right) announces the long-awaited CARES decision in Las Vegas. Las Vegas is one of three cities scheduled to receive a new VA medical center, according to the CARES roadmap.

Jeff Stoffer

to improve services in many areas of America and to bring health care closer to veterans.

The secretary's decision reflects a refreshing willingness by VA to reconsider its original script. The August 2003 Draft National CARES Plan, devised by VA, recommended closing or dramatically changing missions for 23 facilities in the system. The May 7 decision reined in many of those ideas after veterans and non-veterans in affected communities voiced outrage last fall.

To his credit, Secretary Principi listened to those who feared CARES was a prescription for a lesser VA. He also listened to the National CARES Commission, and often asked for further studies rather than fire sales.

In the end, CARES is a better product because veterans got involved and stayed involved. Still, it is far from perfect.

The American Legion remains concerned on many fronts. Realizing that some closures and consolidations have gone back into study, others are approved – Gulfport, Miss., Brecksville, Ohio, and Pittsburgh's Highland Drive Division, for instance. Veterans in those communities now must demand fulfillment of the promise the secretary made in Las Vegas: "I am committed to mitigating any perceived adverse impacts. VA will not interrupt services at current facilities until we can provide care at an alternate site of comparable quality. That's just an inviolate principle.

We will make sure construction is done at the new sites before any changes are made."

The American Legion likewise holds as an inviolate principle that contracted care is rarely the right solution. In dozens of communities, according to CARES, demand is expected to increase sharply in the next few years, especially in the area of long-term care and mental health. However, much to the disappointment of The American Legion, the CARES analysis did not take into consideration VA's current capacity to provide mental health care or long-term care services when envisioning future demand of those services. The CARES decision states clearly that in many affected areas, the rise in demand can be met through contracted care.

Veterans cannot help but think they are staring at the slippery slope of a voucher system, in which VA pays others to care for sick or disabled U.S. veterans. The Legion opposes vouchered care.

CARES would not have been necessary at all if VA health care were funded according to a mandatory, instead of discretionary, formula. With mandatory funding, VA medical centers would not have to use capital-improvement funds to pay for doctors, nurses and medicine. If funding were adequate all along, a titanic overhaul to bring facilities up to date would not be necessary now. Veterans would be benefiting today from the

efficiencies of a well-run machine, rather than waiting for 2022.

Discretionary funding created this problem. Discretionary funding failed to keep up with demand growth and gave VA a patient backlog two years ago of more than 300,000 who waited up to two years to see VA doctors. The formula suspended Priority Group 8 veterans whose eligibility for care came by an act of Congress in 1996 but was struck down by Secretary Principi in 2003, because the lines were too long and money too short.

In Las Vegas on May 7, the secretary said he is willing to discuss how mandatory funding might work. It's obvious that discretionary funding doesn't.

Today, we stand with the roadmap known as CARES in our hands, looking 18 years into an unknowable future, wondering how many new veterans America will produce, and how much money will be available to meet their needs when they come home. CARES now must pass from planning rooms to construction sites, and it must do so with the best possible care for veterans in mind every inch of the way. The journey is only beginning. 🌿

*Paul Morin of Massachusetts is chairman of The American Legion's Veterans Affairs & Rehabilitation Commission.*

*Article design: Holly K. Soria*

## Taxes and tithes

A study published by *The Chronicle of Philanthropy* reveals that wealthy Americans – those with incomes between \$200,000 and \$10 million – “give less generously to charity than both people who are richer and those who are poorer.” The study was conducted by NewTithing, a nonprofit organization that provides wealthy Americans with information on tax-friendly charitable giving.

According to the study, Americans with incomes between \$25,000 and \$200,000 donated about 1 percent of their incomes on average; those



wealthy Americans had taken better advantage of the tax code, it could have contributed billions more toward charitable causes without affecting anyone's standard of living. To find out more, visit [newtithing.org](http://newtithing.org).

– A.W.D.

earning more than \$10 million donated over 1 percent; and those in between donated less than half of 1 percent to charitable causes.

NewTithing isn't trying to fuel the fires of class warfare. Instead, the organization wants to draw attention to the fact that if this middle group of



A ground-based interceptor prototype booster is launched from Vandenberg Air Force Base, which plays a key role in a new national defense system aimed at protecting the United States from attack by North Korea. **U.S. Air Force**

Korean missile attack. The new system should be operational by September, says Air Force Lt. Gen. Ron Kadish, who heads up the Missile Defense Agency.

Interceptors based at Fort Greely, Alaska, and Vandenberg Air Force Base, Calif., will form the core of the new system with other NMD components, such as airborne lasers and sea-based missiles.

With forthcoming hardware and software upgrades in Great Britain, Denmark, Japan and Australia, the NMD will not only be able to intercept missiles inbound from the Middle East, it will become a truly international missile defense by the middle of this decade.

## Fine print

You wouldn't know it by reading the newspaper or watching the evening news, but fewer international terrorist attacks occurred in 2003 than any year since 1969. That news comes from the State Department's annual “Patterns of Global Terrorism” Report.

According to the report, 190 international terror attacks were recorded last year, down from 198 in 2002. The attacks claimed 307 people, including 35 Americans. Most of the attacks happened in Asia. Although the report notes that most of al-Qaida's leadership “is dead or in custody, its membership on the run and its

capabilities sharply degraded,” it adds that additional deadly attacks are certain.

Another major asterisk in the fine print of the report has to do with Iraq. According to the State Department, most of the insurgent attacks in Iraq “do not meet the longstanding definition of international terrorism because they were directed at combatants.”

## Bolsheviks to billionaires

Think fast: what city is home to the most billionaires? If you guessed Seattle, New York, Los Angeles or Geneva, you aren't even close. According to *Forbes* magazine, Moscow is home to more billionaires than any other city on the planet.

With 33 billionaires residing inside the city limits (New York has 31), what was once the capital of world communism is now the capital of accumulated capital. Without question, one factor in Moscow's billionaire glut is graft and corruption, which Russia has not been able to get a handle on just yet. In fact, the top billionaire – oil magnate Mikhail Khodorkovsky – is in jail on tax-evasion charges.

Russia still has to nurture and grow its middle class, but it's impressive that just 13 years after the collapse of the Soviet Union, economic freedom is allowing Russians to build wealth. Lenin must be spinning in his grave.

– Alan W. Dowd

## Line of defense

The Pentagon is ready to activate a national missile defense (NMD) system aimed at protecting the United States from a North

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# Vision health: An eye to the future

BY DR. MINDY AISEN

First came contact lenses. Then laser surgery. Will eyeglasses soon be a thing of the past?

Probably not. Many people do best with traditional eyeglasses, and that's not likely to change in the next few years. Still, it's plain to see that eye care is dramatically advancing. More breakthroughs are on the horizon: For example, scientists with the Department of Veterans Affairs in Boston, Cleveland and Atlanta are working on an artificial retina to restore sight to those with retinitis pigmentosa or age-related macular degeneration. And VA bioengineers in St. Louis are testing an injectable gel that may one day replace lenses in the eyes of aging, farsighted patients.

These high-tech advances are only one part of VA's extensive vision-care effort. VA offers extensive support and rehabilitation for veterans with partial or total vision loss. And all VA patients benefit from comprehensive eye care.

Here's a quick look at the causes, symptoms and treatment of the serious eye problems most common among veterans:

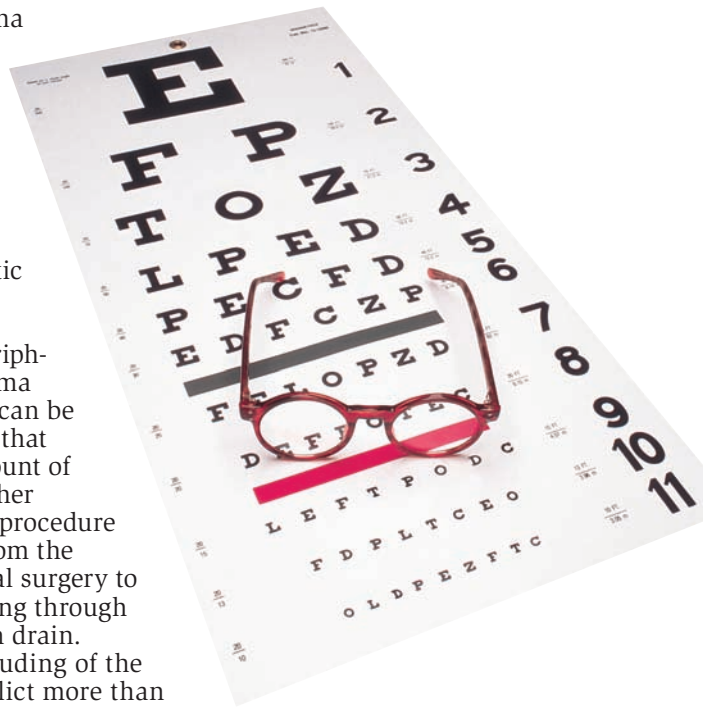
■ **Age-related macular degeneration (ARMD)** is the leading cause of vision loss among older Americans, especially Caucasians. The macula is a tiny area at the back of the eye containing millions of light-sensing cells. In dry ARMD, these cells break down, leading to blurred vision. One in 10 cases progresses to wet ARMD, in which blood and fluid leak under the macula. Wet ARMD is more serious, accounting for 90 percent of the blindness from the disease. Certain vitamins and antioxidants may help prevent or slow the progression of dry ARMD. Wet ARMD is often treated successfully with laser surgery.

■ **Glaucoma** is a hereditary disease that strikes mostly older people, especially blacks and

Hispanics. Glaucoma affects the optic nerve, which connects the retina to the brain. In the most common form, fluid builds up in the eye and creates pressure on the optic nerve, eventually damaging it. This causes a loss of peripheral vision. Glaucoma has no cure, but it can be treated with drugs that help lower the amount of fluid in the eye. Other options are a laser procedure that drains fluid from the eye, or conventional surgery to create a new opening through which the fluid can drain.

■ **Cataracts**, or clouding of the lens in the eye, afflict more than half of Americans by age 80. The cause can be clumps of protein on the lens, which lead to blurred vision, or a yellowing of the lens, which adds a brownish tint to vision. The condition can also increase sensitivity to glare and reduce night vision. Smoking and excess sunlight are thought to increase the risk of cataracts. Vitamins and antioxidants may reduce the risk, according to some studies. Cataract surgery, successful in nine of 10 cases, involves replacing the defective natural lens with an artificial lens.

■ **Diabetic retinopathy** is the leading cause of vision loss in those younger than 65. Among other complications, diabetes affects the tiny blood vessels in the retina. In its advanced stage, this condition is marked by the leaking of blood into the center of the eye, causing spotted or blurred vision. Diabetic retinopathy is often accompanied by swelling of the macula. Both conditions can often be treated with laser surgery. Left untreated, diabetic retinopathy can lead to



blindness. Fortunately, diabetes patients who successfully manage their blood-sugar levels can lower their risk of retinopathy and other complications.

What do all these conditions have in common? They can all be detected through a comprehensive eye exam. Such an exam should include tests of visual acuity, peripheral vision, pressure inside the eye, and corneal thickness. It also should include a dilated eye exam, allowing for inspection of the retina and optic nerve.

Health-care providers usually recommend eye exams every two years for older adults. But those at higher risk for certain conditions should have annual exams. Talk to your doctor about what's right for you.

*Mindy Aisen, M.D., is deputy director of research and development for the Veterans Health Administration.*

*Living Well is designed to provide general information. It is not intended to be, nor is it, medical advice. Readers should consult their personal physicians when they have health problems.*

## For more info

More details on VA vision programs are available on the Internet at:

[www.va.gov/blindrehab](http://www.va.gov/blindrehab).

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# The enigmatic artichoke

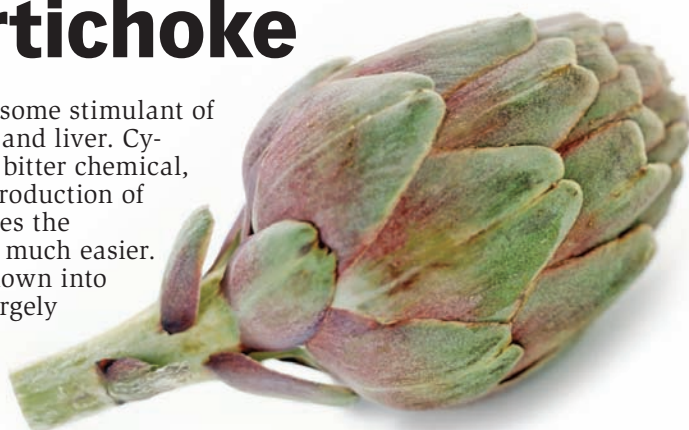
Throughout history, artichokes, including leaves, were believed to be a diuretic, a breath freshener and, of all things, a deodorant. Artichoke leaves have been used as blood cleansers, to improve bile production and secretion to detoxify the liver and skin.

With a taste somewhere between celery and asparagus, the artichoke comes in two varieties. The Jerusalem artichoke, named “sun roots” in Indian, is a member of the sunflower family and native to North America. In the mid-1600s, a French explorer sent the vegetable to Europe, where it quickly spread to Italy and Germany.

Conversely, the globe artichoke, also known as the French or green artichoke, is a member of the thistle family. Globes are somewhat of a gift to the diges-

tion and an awesome stimulant of the gall bladder and liver. Cynarine, an inert bitter chemical, stimulates the production of bile, which makes the digestion of fats much easier. Bile breaks fat down into tiny globules, largely increasing the surface area exposed to digestive juices.

Traditionally, herbalists have used extracts of artichoke to treat high blood pressure, and it is also believed to rid the body of cholesterol. According to a recent report from Boston University, high amounts of dietary fiber, as found in artichokes, appear to reduce the risk of kidney stone formation. It also is a cleanser and detoxifier, making it particu-



larly useful to people suffering from gout, arthritis and rheumatism.

Some say the artichoke also has the qualities of an aphrodisiac, a theory that has not been scientifically proven. But must we leave everything to science?

Source: Jan Eberle, freelance writer

# Aspirin and heart disease

Millions of Americans take aspirin to help prevent heart attack or stroke, but many get little or no protection. The reason is simply aspirin non-responsiveness. And it's unclear why the common pain reliever helps some and has no effect on others.

Although researchers continue to study the problem and argue about its implications, *Harvard Heart Letter* advises that it's not too early to talk with your doctor about being tested to find out if you respond to aspirin.

Aspirin makes small pieces of blood cells less “sticky,” thus less likely to clump and form blood clots that can block a blood vessel in the heart or brain.

However, ongoing research shows:

- Aspirin fails to stop platelets from clumping, or does it only partially, in 5 percent to 40 percent of people who take it.

- An individual's response to aspirin can change over time.

- People who do not respond to aspirin have a

higher risk of heart attack or stroke than those who do.

The idea that aspirin doesn't work for some people is so new that many doctors either aren't aware of the phenomenon or are waiting for more research before testing their patients for aspirin non-responsiveness.

Patients often must take the initiative themselves.

Source: *Harvard Health Publications*



## Stem-cell research not so partisan

In contrast to generally held perceptions, conservative voters are not unanimously opposed to broadening embryonic stem-cell research in the United States, according to a poll made public by the Juvenile Diabetes Research Foundation.

The study showed 56 percent of conservative voters polled support embryonic stem-cell research and favor a broadened policy for federal funding of scientific investigation using embryonic stem cells that would otherwise be discarded from fertility clinics. Thirty-six percent of those polled said they oppose it.

Source: *Juvenile Diabetes Research Foundation*

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More than 150,000 veterans and others attended ceremonies on the National Mall. **AP**

# Dedication Day salutes freedom's heroes

*World War II memorial was the dream of Ohio Legionnaire.*

**BY JOHN RAUGHTER**

**T**hey came from California's high desert, coastal New England and the south side of Chicago. There were Floridians, Texans and Kansans. At least 150,000 members and families of what NBC news anchorman Tom Brokaw calls "the greatest generation" gathered on the National Mall May 29 to witness the dedication of the World War II Memorial.

"These were the modest sons of a peaceful country, and millions of us are very proud to call them 'Dad,'" said President Bush, himself the son of World War II veteran George H.W. Bush, also present. "They gave the best years of their lives to the greatest mission their country ever accepted."

The dedication culminated an improbable chain of events that started with a simple query from a Legionnaire. "Why is there no World War II memorial in Washington?" then-66-year-old Roger Durbin asked his congresswoman,

Rep. Marcy Kaptur, D-Ohio, in 1987. Unfortunately, the World War II veteran and member of Sylvania, Ohio, Post 468 died of cancer before the project's completion, but Kaptur worked relentlessly to make the memorial a reality. With the help of national chairman and former senator Bob Dole, groups and individuals raised \$178 million in private contributions. The American Legion family raised more than \$4.5 million.

The project faced opposition early on. "Some protesters formed a group called Save the Mall," Dole told *The American Legion Magazine* in February. "My response to Save the Mall was, 'We already saved the Mall in World War II, and we saved everything else in town, too.'"

The controversy was forgotten by dedication day. The memorial, designed by Friedrich St. Florian, is positioned at the east end of the Reflecting Pool between the Lincoln Memorial and Washington Monument. It includes a wall of

4,000 gold stars representing the 400,000 Americans killed in the war. It features two main pavilions representing the Atlantic and Pacific theaters, and 56 pillars for the states and territories.

"World War II was the biggest adventure of my life," said Bob Holmes, a member of American Legion Post 553 in Toledo, Ohio. "I was in and out before I was 21 years old." The Navy veteran said attending the dedication was important because the memorial was something he could tell his kids about. His grandson, David Holmes, a member of the Army's 25th Infantry Division, is in Hawaii recuperating from a roadside bomb blast in Iraq. The younger Holmes is trying to remain in the service despite a shattered leg. Neither Bob nor David might be here today if not for a difficult decision made in 1945.

"I was in Manila Bay awaiting orders to invade mainland Japan," Bob says. "Thank God, Harry Truman dropped the A-bomb."

The American Legion family sponsored a hospitality tent at the dedication. The Legion also honored another important legacy of America's World War II veterans: their grandchildren. Hundreds strolled around the Tidal Basin on May 28 in a candlelight walk for the Children's Miracle Network, a national organization and Legion partner that raises money for children's hospitals. Similar events occurred in communities across the country to raise money for local CMN hospitals while honoring hometown World War II veterans.

Although World War II veterans dominated the Memorial Day weekend celebrations in Washington, Conrad Chisholm said the purpose of the memorial is to educate others.

"In World War II, we didn't have television, and radio didn't provide a lot of details," said Chisholm, a Legion past national vice commander and a veteran of the war's European theater. "Some younger people read about World War II, but they might not understand all of its ramifications."

Many Legionnaires attending the event stayed at Washington's Mayflower Hotel, where 60 years earlier Past National Commander Harry W. Colmery wrote the original draft of the GI Bill on hotel stationery. Scores of motorcyclists, including members of The American Legion Riders, rendezvoused at the hotel May 30 to kick off their participation in Rolling Thunder, an annual rally of thousands of motorcyclists paying homage to



Members of The American Legion family participate in a walk-a-thon to raise money for the Children's Miracle Network.

John Raughter

America's veterans and calling attention to POW/MIA issues.

While most of the motorcyclists came of age during the Vietnam and post-Vietnam eras, love of country is the common bond they share with their World War II predecessors. One of those predecessors discussed the diversity and bravery from which America draws during wartime.

"What we dedicate today is not a memorial to war," Dole said. "Rather, it is a tribute to the physical and moral courage that makes heroes out of farm and city boys, that inspires Americans of every generation to lay down their lives for people they'll never meet."

On May 29, Americans said "thank you" to 400,000 who laid down their lives and the 16 million who answered the nation's call. Roger Durbin would have been proud.



American Legion Riders depart the Mayflower Hotel en route to Rolling Thunder. John Raughter

## In appreciation

The American Legion family thanks its corporate and association partners, who contributed to the success of the World War II National Dedication Day:

*Veterans Holidays, American Legion Wireless, NEXTEL, Cole Managed Vision, First National Bank of Omaha, Marsh Affinity Group Services, ING, Sons of the American Revolution and Children's Miracle Network.*

## Posts across nation honor veterans

The American Legion recognizes the efforts of posts to honor World War II veterans nationwide. National headquarters received hundreds of letters describing innovative local activities, including prayer breakfasts, live broadcasts of the national dedication and walk-a-thons benefiting the Children's Miracle Network. Many posts recorded oral histories from World War II veterans, and displayed newspaper clippings, family letters and scrapbooks from that era.

Many posts, such as **Post 2 in Casper, Wyo.**, provided big-screen televisions for World War II veterans to watch the national dedication.

**Bloomington, Ind., Burton Woolery Post 18** reported more than 500 people at its prayer breakfast.

**Beavercreek, Ohio, Post 763's** program booklet featured World War II-era military-service photos, a timeline of World War II events, a list of local World War II veterans, and a tribute to World War II veterans from Post 763.

**Weston, W.Va., Post 4** posted photos of 1,300 local World War II veterans at the local senior center. Post 4 also inducted two active-duty National Guardsmen, recently returned from Iraq, as members.

**Lafayette Post 51 in Uniontown, Pa.** – whose membership includes more than 130 World War II veterans – assisted about 6,000 veterans and their families in getting their names and pictures on the World War II Memorial registry. Twenty local World War II veterans joined The American Legion for the first time by becoming members of Post 51.

The **Department of Pennsylvania** arranged trips for more than 650 veterans and guests to attend the national dedication ceremony.



Visitors enjoy the National D-Day Memorial in Bedford, Va., while the U.S. Navy Band warms up before the 60th D-Day anniversary ceremony. **Elissa Kaupisch**

## 'A great brotherhood'

*D-Day Veterans commemorate 60th anniversary.*

**BY ELISSA KAUPISCH**

**O**n the morning of June 6, 1944, Allied troops landed on the beaches of Normandy, France, as part of Operation Overlord, the largest air, land and sea operation undertaken in history. The D-Day landing, which involved more than 5,000 ships, 11,000 airplanes and 159,000 troops, changed the world forever. The casualties were horrific, but D-Day was indisputably one of the greatest military achievements of all time, one that led to the liberation of Europe and the end of World War II.

The 60th anniversary of D-Day ceremony, "A Memorial Testament to Freedom," drew more than

6,000 people, including more than 100 D-Day veterans, to the National D-Day Memorial in Bedford, Va. The ceremony served a dual purpose, as does the memorial itself: first, to honor the sacrifices of the Allied Forces on D-Day; second, to educate current and future generations about the D-Day legacy.

Bedford was selected as the site for the 88-acre memorial – which was dedicated on June 6, 2001 – not only because Bedford represents small towns across America that sent citizen-soldiers to the war but also because on D-Day, Bedford suffered the highest number of casualties in a single day of fighting. Nineteen of the town's 35 young men who served their

country that day perished on the beaches of Normandy. The "Bedford Boys," as they have affectionately been called, were National Guardsmen serving in Company A of the 116th Infantry Regiment, 29th Infantry Division.

Before the 60th anniversary ceremony began, D-Day veterans talked with visitors. Jack Hoffler had people waiting to meet him. Hoffler, who has received national recognition as the youngest D-Day veteran, wore a vest inscribed with his other distinction: "Youngest Combat Sailor, U.S. Navy. D-Day, June 6, 1944." Hoffler enlisted at age 14 and was 15 at the time of the Normandy invasion.

When asked what D-Day was like, he said,



Andrew Seaman of Richmond, Va., dons the official uniform of the "Bedford Boys."

**Elissa Kaupisch**

"Pure hell or the next thing to it. I was a gunner on a landing craft, and my landing craft sank. I was stranded on Omaha Beach because the ship I was attached to went back to England to get more troops. I was on Omaha Beach from June 6 to July 13 before I got back to my ship. Being in the midst of war at such a young age made me grow up real fast."

Robert Cassel, from Wenonah, N.J., Post 192, missed the invasion by 94 days. "We landed on Utah Beach in September 1944," he said. "The 4th Infantry Division cleared the way and made it easy for us." Concerning the D-Day anniversary, Cassel said, "I have talked to several Navy, Air Force and infantry veterans today, and I discovered we still have a common bond. It's a fellowship we share and, in a way, a great brotherhood."

Visitors that day had the rare opportunity of meeting D-Day veteran Charles J. Chibitty, the last surviving Comanche Code Talker. He described how Comanches used their language to send messages over field telephones, messages that included details about troop strength and the movement of troops and weaponry. Chibitty sent the first message on D-Day, which translated, "Five miles to the right of the designated area and five miles inland, the fighting is fierce, and we need help."

Chibitty, 81, was a senior in high school when he was asked to use his native language in World War II as a code-talker. "The Navajos went to the Pacific, and the Comanches went to Europe," said Chibitty, who was attached to the U.S. Army's 4th Infantry Division, Signal Company, that landed on Utah Beach. "What we couldn't say in the Comanche language, we'd substitute some other thing. A tank became a 'wah-kah-lay-ya' - a turtle - because it had a hard shell. 'Bomber' translated into 'pregnant airplane.' 'Po-sah-tie-vo' was used for Adolf Hitler, which

means 'crazy white man.'"

Highlights of the commemoration ceremony included:

- Choral music performed by the Sea Chanters, accompanied by the U.S. Navy Band from Washington
- The reading of Gen. Dwight Eisenhower's D-Day order
- An awards presentation for the winners of a regional high-school essay contest, in which students answered the question "Why does D-Day matter today?"

- An address called "D-Day: Then and Now" by April Cheek, National D-Day Memorial Foundation director of education
- A 60th anniversary address by U.S. Rep. Robert W. Goodlatte, R-Va.



The USO Liberty Belles honor the USO's 63-year tradition of entertaining troops. *Elissa Kaupisch*

Before the crowd was dismissed, U.S. Sen. George Allen, R-Va., asked all D-Day veterans in the

audience to stand or raise their hands to be recognized. As they stood, thunderous applause and cheers erupted, followed by a standing ovation.

After the ceremony, veterans and guests were welcomed to the canteen for food and fellowship. A special USO show featuring the USO Liberty Belles, a troupe from World USO Headquarters in Washington, sang classics from the 1940s. Reminiscent of the Andrews Sisters, the Liberty Belles are known for their rousing medleys of patriotic songs honoring the USO's 63-year tradition of entertaining troops.

Representatives from the Library of Congress American Folklife Center were on hand to record oral histories of D-Day veterans.

Members of Bedford American Legion Post 54 assisted with many of the D-Day anniversary preparations and "Freedom Week" events. The day of the ceremony, post volunteers provided memorial-site tours, staffed information booths, helped with traffic control, and drove buses that brought veterans and guests to the memorial site.

## 60th Anniversary of D-Day and "Freedom Week" Activities

Bedford, Va., and surrounding communities celebrated "Freedom Week" with D-Day veterans beginning May 29 and continuing through the commemoration ceremony on June 6. Events included a patriotic bluegrass show; a concert of 1940s music at the National D-Day Memorial; an art exhibit of D-Day prints at the Bedford Public Library; a living history encampment, where visitors experienced the life of a soldier during World War II; "A Visit with Alex Kershaw," internationally known author of "The Bedford Boys;" and a "GI Jive Dance," where D-Day veterans and guests danced to the big-band music performed by a 17-piece orchestra. The crowd also enjoyed a silent auction of World War II memorabilia, 1940s and 1950s dance routines performed by "Solely Swing," a group of students from Virginia Polytechnic Institute, and a USO show performed by the USO Liberty Belles.

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# Eagle Scout of the Year named

A McMinnville, Tenn., student is The American Legion Eagle Scout of the Year for 2004.

Garrett F. Martin, 17, a senior at Warren County High School and a member of Boy Scout Troop 631, earned the award and a college scholarship worth \$10,000.

The award recognizes Martin's practical citizenship at school and in the community, Scouting and his church involvement at First Baptist Church McMinnville. For his Eagle Scout project, Martin organized a Patriot Day flag retirement ceremony in September 2002. He directed



Courtesy Garrett F. Martin

a team of scouts who handled three collection centers, then orchestrated the actual ceremony conducted by his troop.

"The most memorable portion of the flag-retirement ceremony was the participation of veterans," Martin said. "Their patriotism was just as much alive today as it was when they were in battle. I received

notes from veterans thanking me and expressing their appreciation. They have shared those feelings with me, and I shall never forget."

An Eagle Scout since 2002, Martin is an honors student. He

plans to study music at Carson-Newman College in Jefferson City, Tenn. In addition to Scouting, Allen is active with the American Red Cross, is a charter member of a theatre restoration group, serves meals for Love Outreach and is a board member of the Warren County Fair Association. More than a dozen other community organizations benefit from his involvement during the year.

The American Legion awarded a \$2,500 scholarship to Christopher W. Jackson of Lincoln Park, N.J.; William "Ben" Towne of Litchfield, N.H.; and Benjamin Banwart of Shakopee, Minn.

The American Legion has supported Scouting since its first national convention in 1919. Legion posts sponsor more than 2,500 Scouting units, serving 72,000 young people, at an annual cost of more than \$1.7 million.

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Servicemembers typically are issued two battle dress uniforms upon entering the armed forces. Additional BDUs must be purchased from clothing allowances. Often, demand is greater than the supply, and shortages in certain sizes exist. Responding to recent anticipated shortages, The American Legion's Emblem Sales division has acquired top-quality BDUs, available for immediate delivery at low prices and free domestic shipping. Emblem Sales is able to offer them at cheaper prices than if purchased from the armed forces supply service.

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## How to Submit a Reunion

The *American Legion Magazine* publishes reunion notices for veterans. Send notices to *The American Legion Magazine*, Attn: Reunions, P.O. Box 1055, Indianapolis, IN 46206, fax (317) 630-1280 or e-mail [reunions@legion.org](mailto:reunions@legion.org).

Include the branch of service and complete name of the group, no abbreviations, with your request. The listing also should include the reunion dates and city, along with a contact name, telephone number and e-mail address. Listings are published free of charge.

Due to the large number of reunions, *The American Legion Magazine* will publish a group's listing only once a year. Notices should be sent at least six months prior to the reunion to ensure timely publication.

## Other Notices

"In Search Of" is a means of getting in touch with people from your unit to plan a reunion. We do not publish listings that seek people for interviews, research purposes, military photos or help in filing a VA claim. Listings must include the name of the unit from which you seek people, the time period and the location, as well as a contact name, tele-

phone number and e-mail address. Send notices to *The American Legion Magazine*, Attn: "In Search Of," P.O. Box 1055, Indianapolis, IN 46206, fax (317) 630-1280 or e-mail [reunions@legion.org](mailto:reunions@legion.org).

The magazine will not publish the names of individuals, only the name of the unit from which you seek people. Listings are published free of charge.

Life Membership notices are published for Legionnaires who have been awarded life memberships by their posts. This does not include a member's own Paid-Up-For-Life membership. Notices must be submitted on official forms, which may be obtained by sending a self-addressed stamped envelope to *The American Legion Magazine*, Attn: Life Memberships, P.O. Box 1055, Indianapolis, IN 46206.

"Comrades in Distress" listings must be approved by the Legion's Veterans Affairs & Rehabilitation division. If you are seeking to verify an injury received during service, contact your Legion department service officer for information on how to publish a notice.

To respond to a "Comrades in Distress" listing, send a letter to *The American Legion Magazine*, Attn: Comrades in Distress, P.O. Box 1055, Indianapolis, IN 46206. Include the listing's CID number in your response.

"Taps" notices are published only for Legionnaires who served as department commanders or national officers.

## AIR FORCE/ARMY AIR FORCES

**9th AF 397th Bomb Grp (All Sqdns)**, Dayton, OH, 9/29-10/3, Ernie Lutz, (517) 676-4601; **27th Air Trans Assn (WWII)** - 310th, 311th, 312th & 325th Ferrying Sqds, 86th, 87th, 320th & 321st Trans Sqds, 519th & 520th Serv Sqds, Shreveport, LA, 9/30-10/2, Donald Diehm, (828) 892-5422; **37th FS/FIS/FTS**, Fort Worth, TX, 10/8-11, Leslie Knapp, 9819 Gemini Drive, San Antonio, TX 78217, [lesknapp@juno.com](mailto:lesknapp@juno.com)

**64th Trp Carrier Grp**, Chickasha, OK, Sept, Vern Montgomery, (317) 241-5264; **363rd Ftr Grp "Mustang"** 161st Tact Recon Sqdn, Omaha, NE, 10/14-16, Art Mimmler, (209) 966-2713; **379th Bomb Grp (H)**, Dayton, OH, 9/7-11, T. Cabanski, (303) 697-6265; **381st Bomb Grp (H) Memorial Assn**, Seattle, 9/1-4, J.K. Waddell, P.O. Box 6064, Madison, WI 53176, [jkwadd@aol.com](mailto:jkwadd@aol.com); **389th, 390th & 391st Ftr Bomb Sqdns (England AFB, LA)**, New Orleans, 10/20-24, John Shirley, (512) 671-3464

**449th Bomb Grp (WWII)**, Chattanooga, TN, 10/10-13, Lee Kenney, (321) 242-8654; **501st Tact Cont Grp Assn** - 501st, 526th Tact Cont Grps, 501st Hq & Hq Sqdn, 807th Tact Cont Sqdn, 601st, 602nd, 603rd & 604th AC&W Sqdns, 615th & 616th AC&W Sqdns, 943rd Forward Air Cont Sqdn, 555th Sig AC&W Sqdn, Branson, MO, 10/17-20, Ron Anderson, (701) 293-5473, [halron117@aol.com](mailto:halron117@aol.com)

**768th AC&W Sqdn (Moriarty AFS)**, Moriarty, NM, 9/23-25, Orv Hendrickson, (715) 235-7254, [vmhnm521@hotmail.com](mailto:vmhnm521@hotmail.com); **AF Gunners Assn**, Charleston, SC, 9/22-25, Dan Danish, (210) 520-1517; **AF Postal & Courier Assn**, Las Vegas, 9/14-17, Dan Neff, (909) 792-5424, [afpcadnneff@cyberhotline.com](mailto:afpcadnneff@cyberhotline.com); **Air Rescue Assn**, Seattle, 9/22-25, Sandy Gonzalez, (407) 834-0105, [sgonzalez@cfl.rr.com](mailto:sgonzalez@cfl.rr.com); **Avn Cadet Pilot Tng Class 55-S**, Midland, TX, 10/7-9, Marvin Craig, (970) 493-0842, [falconuno1@aol.com](mailto:falconuno1@aol.com)

**Vietnam Sec Police Assn**, Tucson, AZ, 10/7-10, Don Graham, (610) 691-6960, [tuyhoa68@att.net](mailto:tuyhoa68@att.net); **Westover AFSPFF/6594th, 8th RTG/Weisbaden-Shierstein 7499th/497th RTG**, Bay St. Louis, MS, 10/3-8, Jim Grimm, (352) 483-3772, [patjimgr@aol.com](mailto:patjimgr@aol.com)

## ARMY

**3rd Cav Grp Vets Assn 3rd**, 43rd Sqdns, Detroit, 9/10-12, Pat McDonald, (248) 332-0734, [patmac2260@aol.com](mailto:patmac2260@aol.com); **3rd Eng Cbt Bn**, Albuquerque, NM, 9/19-21, Don Lloyd, (509) 965-3231, [dotandon@nwinfo.net](mailto:dotandon@nwinfo.net); **5th Armd Div Assn (WWII)**, Covington, KY, Sept,

Will Cook, (419) 739-9677, [wc5ad@bright.net](mailto:wc5ad@bright.net); **7th FA Rgt**, Philadelphia, 9/9-11, Stanley Stankiewicz, (910) 822-0703; **30th FA Bn**, Branson, MO, 9/10-11, Ambrose Peters, (573) 238-2791; **34th Inf Div (All Units)**, Louisville, KY, 9/9-12, Ray Rudolph, (412) 486-6536, [redbulljr@cs.com](mailto:redbulljr@cs.com); **40th Inf Div 160th Rgt A Co**, Nashville, TN, 9/28-30, Roger Lueckenhoff, (573) 364-4145, [lueck@fidnet.com](mailto:lueck@fidnet.com); **42nd Inf Plt Scout Dog (Vietnam, 1966-1971)**, Phoenix, 10/15-17, J. McIntyre, (612) 522-9377, [tjj42@msn.com](mailto:tjj42@msn.com)

**62nd Avn Co AML & Attached Units (1964-1965)**, 9/30-10/4, Frank Estes, (334) 774-5571, [estesf@snowhill.com](mailto:estesf@snowhill.com); **65th Armd FA Bn (WWII)**, Washington, 9/30-10/3, Wallace Eckdahl, (952) 929-4078, [aecckdahl@isd.net](mailto:aecckdahl@isd.net); **68th Sig Bn**, Washington, 8/20-22, Mike Biloz, (239) 731-6965, [mpbiloz52@msn.com](mailto:mpbiloz52@msn.com); **97th Inf Div 322nd Med Bn**, Mobile, AL, 10/14-17, David "Dixie" Howell, (251) 847-2497; **97th Inf Div 387th Inf Hq Co 1st Bn**, San Jose, CA, 9/13-17, Jack Burgett, (408) 249-2392

**106th Ord Co HM (Korea)**, Roswell, NM, 10/4-7, R.J. Weeks, (417) 732-8262, [rjweeks@hotmail.com](mailto:rjweeks@hotmail.com); **158th Rgt Cbt Team "Bushmasters"**, Washington, 9/13-16, Jim Stallings, (602) 274-1484, [jstall@cox.net](mailto:jstall@cox.net); **249th Eng Bn (WWII-2004)**, Indianapolis, 9/23-25, Irmin Magruder, (540) 886-6941, [engr249@verizon.net](mailto:engr249@verizon.net); **314th Inf (WWII)**, Branson, MO, 9/8-11, Wayne Irby, (800) 925-8498, [info@bransonfun.com](mailto:info@bransonfun.com); **440th Sig Avn Const Bn**, Reno, NV, 10/5-7, Jim Hendricks, [lesmagi@jps.net](mailto:lesmagi@jps.net)

**461st Ord Ammo Co (Korea, 1950-1952)**, Minneapolis, 9/17-19, Richard "Andy" Anderson, (989) 739-2172, [reabaa@voyager.net](mailto:reabaa@voyager.net); **558th AAA AW Bn (WWII)**, Bedford, PA, 9/17-19, Bill Drobnich, (814) 766-2674; **650th Eng Topo Bn**, Chattanooga, TN, 10/5-9, Frank Captain, (718) 667-4231, [fcapt@si.rr.com](mailto:fcapt@si.rr.com); **698th AAA Bn**, Nashville, TN, 10/14-17, Kenneth Elkins, (251) 633-7616

**1103rd/555th Eng C Grp/333rd Eng SS Rgt**, Branson, MO, 9/21-24, Wayne Kuhn, (715) 868-5390; **3118th Sig Serv Grp SHAEF (WWII)**, Grand Rapids, MI, 9/9-12, Jim Sands, (941) 625-3574, [jsands212@comcast.net](mailto:jsands212@comcast.net); **8221st Army Unit Assn (Korea, 1950-1954)**, Branson, MO, Ken Paulson, (763) 262-2840; **B Co 593rd EBSR**, Louisville, KY, 9/11-14, John McGrath, (502) 448-3118; **Baker Co 15th Inf Rgt 3rd Inf Div**, Hinesville, GA, 9/14-18, Dick Ashton, (410) 686-1197, [carpeter4@wmconnect.com](mailto:carpeter4@wmconnect.com); **L Co 35th Inf Rgt 25th Inf Div**, Portland, OR, 9/7-11, R.L. Roper, (828) 692-2279; **OCS Inf Class 22-1952**, New Orleans, 9/27-29, Don Buss, (508) 756-8220, [donaldbuss@wmconnect.com](mailto:donaldbuss@wmconnect.com)

## COAST GUARD

**USCGC Ingham WHEC 35**, Charleston, SC, 9/30-10/2, Jack Elam, (352) 746-0079, [jlecpe@atlantic.net](mailto:jlecpe@atlantic.net)

## JOINT

**Pearl Harbor 63rd Anniv**, Honolulu, 12/4-7, Sy Canton, (561) 865-8495; **Reunion in the Philippines (Manila, Corregidor, Subic/ Olongapo, Bataan, Clark Field)**, 10/16-28, Judy Buzzell, (703) 212-0695, [info@subicbayreunion.com](mailto:info@subicbayreunion.com)

## MARINES

**10th Def/AAA Bn (WWII)**, Gatlinburg, TN, 9/12-15, Ben Taylor, (865) 674-8608, [btaylor@charter.net](mailto:btaylor@charter.net); **Easy Co 2nd Bn 5th Mar 1st Mar Div (Korea, 1950-1953)**, Savannah, GA, 9/15-19, Evans Kerrigan, (203) 655-3323, [eeekerrigan@aol.com](mailto:eeekerrigan@aol.com); **Golf Co 2nd Bn 5th Mar 1st Mar Div (Vietnam)**, Washington, 9/24-26, Larry Ortiz, (805) 685-4221, [iso@vnggrunt@verizon.net](mailto:iso@vnggrunt@verizon.net); **MACS-8**, Las Vegas, 9/16-19, Tommy Redus, (662) 272-5292; **MAG-11, 12 & 14**, Branson, MO, 10/13-16, James Jordan, (417) 535-4945, [james.m.jordan@directway.com](mailto:james.m.jordan@directway.com); **Rgt Wpns Co 24th Rgt 4th Mar Div**, Cape Canaveral, FL, 11/3-6, Norbert Krass, (239) 768-5949, [nk2@earthlink.net](mailto:nk2@earthlink.net); **VMR-952 Trans Sqdn**, Oregon, IL, 10/14-17, Ray Doyle, (815) 734-6579

## NAVY

**6th Naval Beach Bn (Omaha Beach, D-Day)**, Peoria, IL, 9/8-12, Ed Marriott, (770) 466-8323, [bandemar@bellsouth.net](mailto:bandemar@bellsouth.net); **113th Seabees**, Albuquerque, NM, 9/14-19, Gilbert Irps, (815) 937-9698; **Assn of Minemen**, Charleston, SC, 10/8-10, Robert Hart, (843) 383-0882, [cnbhart@adelphia.net](mailto:cnbhart@adelphia.net); **GCA/ATC Assn**, 9/14-19, Larry Lohse, (360) 679-3391, [supernine@oakharbor.net](mailto:supernine@oakharbor.net); **Naval Cryptologic Vets Assn New England Chpt**, East Lyme, CT, 10/8-9, Phil Sirmons, (860) 739-6006, [asir@peoplepc.com](mailto:asir@peoplepc.com);

**USS Agawam AOG 6**, Reno, NV, 10/10-12, John Nicholson, (937) 323-0173, [snipenick1@aol.com](mailto:snipenick1@aol.com); **USS Alderamin AK 116 (WWII)**, Perrysburg, OH, 9/17-19, Loren Brown, (419) 693-6680; **USS Belet APD 109**, Covington, KY, 9/13-15, Erma Chasteen, (937) 437-6006, [ermarc38@wmconnect.com](mailto:ermarc38@wmconnect.com); **USS Bremerton CA 130/SSN 698**, San Antonio, 9/11-15, Robert Polanowski, (585) 365-2316, [skica130@aol.com](mailto:skica130@aol.com)

**USS Cabezon SS 334**, St. Marys, GA, 11/2-6, Jim Johnston, [jimss415@aol.com](mailto:jimss415@aol.com); **USS Cusk SS 348**, Cleveland, 9/1-5, Nelson Kirsch, (216) 464-9391, [nmkirsch@att.net](mailto:nmkirsch@att.net)

# Choose Life Grow Young with HGH

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Like a picked flower cut from the source, we gradually wilt physically and mentally and become vulnerable to a host of degenerative diseases, that we simply weren't susceptible to in our early adult years.

Modern medical science now regards aging as a disease that is treatable and preventable and that "aging", the disease, is actually a compilation of various diseases and pathologies, from everything, like a rise in blood glucose and pressure to diabetes, skin wrinkling and so on. All of these aging symptoms can be stopped and rolled back by maintaining Growth Hormone levels in the blood at the same levels HGH existed in the blood when we were 25 years old. There is a receptorsite in almost every cell in the human

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Growth Hormone first synthesized in 1985 under the Reagan Orphan drug act, to treat dwarfism, was quickly recognized to stop aging in its tracks and reverse it to a remarkable degree. Since then, only the lucky and the rich have had access to it at the cost of \$20,000 US per year.

Many in hollywood's glamour sets, who never seem to age like you or I, have a special secret to tell, and even space pioneer and US Senator John Glen stays vital with HGH.

The next big breakthrough was to come in 1997 when the American Anti-aging Society, a group of doctors and scientists, developed an all-natural source product which would cause your own natural HGH to be released again and do all the remarkable things it did for you in your 20's. Now available to every adult for the price of a coffee and donut a day.

GHR now available n America, just in time for the aging Baby Boomers and everyone else from age 30 to 90 who doesn't want to age but would rather stay young, beautiful and healthy all of the time.

The new HGH releasers are winning converts from the synthetic HGH users as well, since GHR is just as effective, is oral instead of

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GHR is a natural releaser, has no known side effects, unlike the synthetic version and has no known drug interactions. Progressive doctors admit that this is the direction medicine is seeking to go, to get the body to heal itself instead of employing drugs. GHR is truly a revolutionary paradigm shift in medicine and, like any modern leapfrog advance, many others will be left in the dust holding their limited, or useless drugs and remedies.

It is now thought that HGH is so comprehensive in its healing and regenerative powers that it is today, where the computer industry was twenty years ago, that it will displace so many prescription and non-prescription drugs and health remedies that it is staggering to think of.

The president of BIE Health Products, the American distributor, stated in a recent interview, "I've been waiting for these products since the 70's. We knew they would come, if only we could stay healthy and live long enough to see them! If you want to stay on top of your game, physically and mentally as you age, this product is a boon, especially for the highly skilled professionals who have made large investments in their education, and experience. Also with the failure of Congress to honor our seniors with pharmaceutical coverage policy, it's more important than ever to take pro-active steps to safeguard your health. Continued use of GHR will make a radical difference in your health, HGH is particularly helpful to the elderly who, given a choice, would rather stay independent in their own home, strong healthy and alert enough to manage their own affairs, exercise and stay involved in their communities. Frank, age 85 walks two miles a day, plays golf, belongs to a dance club for seniors, has a girl friend again and doesn't need Viagra, passed his drivers test and is hardly ever home when we call - GHR delivers.

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2nd Mil Railway Serv (France, 1944-1945), Donald Stone, (262) 785-5576, dstone@mcw.edu

3rd Div 10th Eng Co C Motor Pool (Kumwa Valley, Korea, 1952-1953), Orwald "Ozzie" Bruss, (920) 739-8097, ozziebr@tpawis.org

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7th Bn 15th FA (Vietnam, 1967-1971), Dave Holdorf, (414) 464-2939, hidavo@earthlink.net

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55th MAS Air Evac (Rhein Main AB, Germany, 1963), Dick Jones, (817) 421-4617, djpj57@verizon.net

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434th AAF Bomb Sqdn (North Africa, Oct 1942), Rudy Swoboda, (406) 656-5663

438th Army Band (Camp Stoneman, CA, 1947), Al Vanderveen, (269) 381-0883

457th Ftr Sqdn 506th Ftr Grp 7th Ftr Cmd (Iwo Jima, WWII), Mary Ellen Ramsden, (978) 671-4432, mrams12750@aol.com

458th Trans Co Lighter Amph LARC V & PBR (Vietnam, 1966-1969), Edward Bell, (419) 227-4499

485th Eng C Bn (Germany, 1950-1955), John Hetzel, (732) 681-7672

540th QM Co 55th QM Depot (ASCOM City, Buppong, Korea, 1961-1962), Floyd Arnel, (209) 823-9724, farnel1184@aol.com

541st QM Co 56th QM Depot (Giessen, Germany, 1947-1951), Floyd Arnel, (209) 823-9724, farnel1184@aol.com

565th Med Co Amb (Baumholder, Germany, 1964-1966), Jim Gardner, (360) 636-2457

798th, 1798th Ord Cos 34th Air Depot (San Bernardino, CA, 1942), Joseph Kenney, (309) 925-3459

2771st Phototopo Co 29th Eng Base Topo Bn (Manila, Philippines, 1946-1947), Don Nash, (925) 283-8255, drsdnash@sbcglobal.net

3357th Student Sq Class 09051B PP R-3350 (Chanute AFB, IL, Sept-Nov 1951), Richard Doll, (520) 825-7927, radoll@gbronline.com

5074th USAF Dispensary AAC (1966-1968), H.L. Van Der Kolk, Dis Spectrum-Blodgett, 1840 Wealthy St. S.E., Grand Rapids, MI 49506, henry.vanderkolk@spectrum-health.org

6091st SRS "Matt's Cats" B-29 Crew (Yokota AB, Japan, 1954-1955), Robert Halleran, (772) 879-7855

6987th Sec Grp Dawg Flt (Shu Lin Kou, Taiwan, 1968-1972), Scott Hiester, (610) 670-1984, shnits@aol.com

7101st CE Sqdn (Base Fire Dept, Wiesbaden AFB, Germany, 1969-1973), Andre Greene, (718) 828-5602

A Co 1st Armd Amph Tract Bn 1st Mar Div (Korea, 1952-1954), John "J.J." Henry, (914) 965-9892

B Co 3rd Bn 77th Armor 5th Div "Red Diamond," (Fort Devens, Camp Drum, Fort Stewart, 1962-1964), Douglas "Dick" Nixon, (812) 825-9759, chelmdixon@aol.com

B Co 24th S&T Bn (Augsburg, Germany, 1966-1970), Robert Hones Jr., (781) 828-8099

B Trp 3rd Sqdn 8th Cav 8th Inf Div (Coleman Barracks, Mannheim or Sandhofen, Germany, 1960-1963), Clark Elftman, (989) 453-2459, celftman@avci.net

Bombadiers Class 44-1 DR San Angelo, TX, Bombadier School Grads (Jan 1944), Max Trinoski, (708) 474-4639

CBU-201 Seabees (Antarctica, 1966-1967), Michael Liso, (203) 467-2312, drillinst1205@aol.com

CINCPACFLT Personnel (1954-1956), Cy Fitterer, (952) 831-0535, cyrley@skypoint.com

Co 246 (Camp Dewey, Barracks 1101, NTC Great Lakes, IL, Aug-Oct 1950), Larry Hagenah, 3432 Valley Road, Winston-Salem, NC 27106

D Co 106th Med Co (Camp Robinson, AK, 1942), Wayne Blake, (605) 336-1554, cpikennyblake@msn.com

Det 2 1141st Spec Activ Sqdn (Fontainebleau, France, 1958-1964), Dick Herzfeld, (414) 445-2670, great-pr@att.net

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Female Recruit Co 3127 (Orlando, FL, July-

Sept 1974), Barbara D'Amato, (863) 855-7274

HQ Co 321st US ASA Bn (Korea, 1956-1959), Jim Trautman, (507) 388-6496

I Co 32nd Inf Rgt 7th Inf Div (North Korea, May-July 1953), Patricia Arnold, 271 Whetstone Drive, Barren Springs, VA 24313, parnold@psknet.com

M Co 1st Inf Rgt 6th Inf Div (Camp Skipworth, Korea, 1947-1948), James Dengel, (718) 884-7064

Mar Corps Spec Attachment (Clarksville, TN, 1952-1956), J.A. Shipley, (410) 987-4422

Med Plt HQ 3rd Armd Rifle Bn 50th Inf Old 373rd ARB (Wildflecken, Germany, 1957-1960), Jacob Lachenmayer, (570) 648-0844, jakethesnake34@yahoo.com

Moroccan Reunion Assn (All Branches, Eras), Robert Sieborg, 2717 N. 120th Ave., Omaha, NE 68164

NAVCAD/ AOC (All Classes, Pensacola, FL, 1955), Carl Carlson, (802) 658-1504, topgun980@att.net

NTC Camp Ward, ID (1942-1944), Elizabeth Spooner, (281) 589-7901

Plt 209 Quonset Huts Sect (ME to SC boot camp, Apr 1954), Robert Stengel, (508) 867-6009

REDHorse/Prime Beef (All Units, 1965-2004), Tom Gallagher, (352) 860-1629, tgallag1@tampabay.rr.com

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Trans Branch HQ Cmd SHAPE (Paris, 1962-1965), Phil Bruce, 00-61-2-42-285084, philbruce84@hotmail.com

Trp 7 42nd Cav Recon Sqdn (Europe, WWII), Phillip Kinmon, (318) 323-4408, jodi52632@msn.com

US Naval Hosp Chelsea, MA (Record Office Swing Shift Crew, 1945-1946), Bud Robbins, hburgbud2@aol.com

USCGC Mangrove WAGL 232 (1941-1946), Michael Zurad, (847) 967-9356

USS Barnegat AVP 10 (1943-1945), T.A. Mickelson, (920) 324-2478

USS Brinkley Bass DD 887 (1945-1973), Robert Powell, (360) 897-9347, cabost3@aol.com

USS Bullock AK 165 (Philippines, 1945), Marvin Raymond Sr., (509) 452-2926, rcrownvic@aol.com

USS Constellation CV/CVA 64 Crew & Air Grps, Jerry O'Connor, (360) 275-3729

USS Coucal ASR 8 (Opn Crossroads, 1946-1947), Henry "Gus" King, P.O. Box 217, Paw Paw, WV 25434

USS Lexington CV 2 & Avn Ord (June 1941-sinking), David Hughey, dalexhughey@juno.com

USS Mahopac ATA 196, Ernest Williams, (850) 249-0333, ernievern@webtv.net

USS Neosho AO 143 "Plank Holders," Glenn Hirst, (317) 547-3925, zigzag65@aol.com

VA-212 "Rampart Raiders" Line Crew (Moffett Field, CA, 1956-1957), Joe Lee, (770) 969-8824

YP 400 (Aleutians, 1942-1943), Ray Horton, (541) 673-6491

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George P. Sterbenz, Dept. of Alaska. Nat'l Americanism Cncl. Vice Chmn. 1992-1993 and Dept. Cmdr. 1993-1994.

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## parting shots

An apple a day keeps the doctor away. An onion a day keeps everyone away.

**A MAN STAYING** in a posh hotel called room service one morning and read from the menu. "I'd like one undercooked egg that's runny, and one overcooked egg that's tough and hard to eat. I'd also like grilled bacon a bit on the cold side, burnt toast, butter straight from the freezer that is impossible to spread, and a pot of lukewarm coffee."

"That's a complicated order, sir," the bewildered waiter said. "It might be quite difficult."

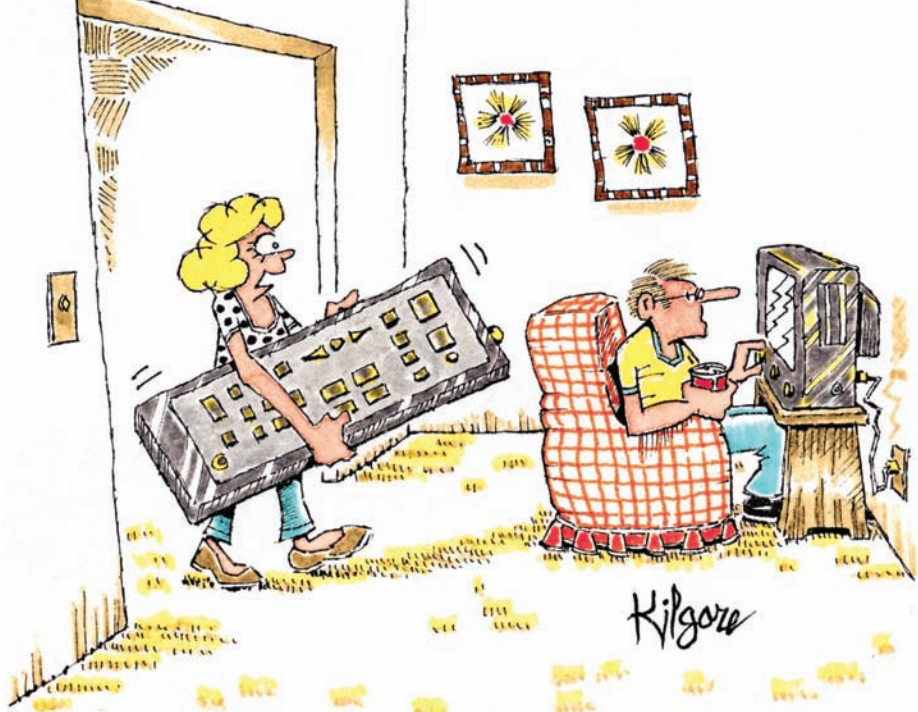
"It can't be that difficult," the guest sarcastically replied. "That's exactly what you brought me yesterday."

**AN ALARM CLOCK** is a small device used to wake people who have no children.

**A MAN** is feeling poorly, so he visits his doctor. After numerous tests, the doctor says, "I'm sorry, but you have an incurable condition. I can't do anything for you." The man pleads with the doctor to suggest anything he might do to improve his condition, so the doctor says he might try going to a spa and taking a daily mud bath.

"Is there any hope of a cure?" the man asks.

"No," the doctor replies, "but it will help you get used to dirt."



"Let's see you lose this one."

**AT A NUDIST COLONY** for communists, two old men are sitting on the front porch. One turns to the other and says, "I say, old boy, have you read Marx?" And the other says, "Yes, I believe it's these wicker chairs."

### HIS ONE AND ONLY

Eve: "Adam, are you seeing another woman?"

Adam: "Do you think I'm made of ribs?"

**A WOMAN** answered her front door to find a plumber standing there. "I'm here to fix the leaky pipe," he announced.

"I didn't call a plumber," the woman said.

"How do you like that?" the plumber grunted. "They call you up and tell you it's an emergency, and then they move away."

### AFTER A SHIP

sank in the ocean, three men ended up stranded in a lifeboat. They floated for days without food and water. One afternoon, a bottle floated up



"Basically what you're saying is that I get a box of chocolate-chip cookies, and the sixth-grade class gets a field trip to Tuscany."

to the boat. The men grabbed the bottle, and when they pulled the cork a genie appeared.

"I'll grant each of you one wish," the genie said.

"I wish I was home," the first man said. Poof! He disappeared.

"I wish I was home, too," the second man said. Poof! He disappeared.

The third man looked around. "Gee, I'm kind of lonely," he said. "I wish my friends were here with me."





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